

**RIVER ROAD & SANTA CLARA**  
**COMMUNITY TRANSITION & HERITAGE**  
**WHITE PAPER**

The logo features a light gray diamond shape. Inside the diamond, the text "River Road/Santa Clara" is written in a bold, italicized serif font. Below this, the words "TRANSITION" and "PROJECT" are stacked in a smaller, bold, sans-serif font.

***River Road/  
Santa Clara***  
**TRANSITION  
PROJECT**

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# River Road/Santa Clara Community Transition Project Transition and Heritage White Paper

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## **Goals**

This River Road/Santa Clara Transition and Heritage Strategy White Paper is intended to contribute to effective community transition plan(s) for the territory within the Eugene/Springfield Urban Growth Boundary (UGB) in the River Road and Santa Clara communities. The suggestions herein encompass an array of potential service delivery opportunities and options that the City of Eugene, Lane County, local special service districts and other service providers, and the citizens of River Road and Santa Clara could consider to assist in the transition of these neighborhoods as future urbanization occurs. The options identified are intended to be of equal usefulness to the City and the County, other service providers, and the two communities in fostering a creative dialogue on growth impacts and in reaching mutual agreement on effective strategies to sustain current and historic community institutions and heritage in the face of the changes brought about by annexation and urbanization.

## **Key Issues**

Prior annexation and urbanization in the River Road and Santa Clara neighborhoods have been driven by such factors as the demand for expanding urban services to new developments, utility extensions, the development of individual existing lots, local landowner preferences, and the needs of local governments and service providers. The result is a checkerboard of gerrymandered and sometimes isolated incorporated territory, often as small as individual 5,000 square foot residential lots. Approximately 30% of River Road and 40% of Santa Clara has been incorporated into the City of Eugene through 2005.

From the perspective of the City of Eugene, and perhaps some other service providers, the foregoing situation may contribute to making service provision difficult to manage, in addition to raising issues of service and tax equity between in-City and unincorporated residents and property owners. Matters are further complicated in that the unincorporated areas of River Road and Santa Clara are not simply served by Lane County (or even served by the City under agreement with the County). Portions of the two neighborhoods are served by two independent fire protection districts, two water supply districts, and a parks and recreation district. The Eugene Water and Electric Board also has a part in service provision.

The range of land uses across the two communities are also very diverse, including large lot residential, agricultural lands and homes, newer subdivisions, commercial centers and older business uses, aging and brand new public institutions, public parklands and playgrounds, river floodplain and riparian areas, and even an adjacent railroad maintenance yard (this last use is just outside the community boundary). Existing streets exhibit the same range – recently improved urban arterials “morph” into treed rural roads; and newer neighborhood streets are curbed and developed with sidewalks, but older streets are often minimally or poorly paved with conventional drainage swales as the norm.

Based on published materials, most especially the 2002 River Road/Santa Clara Urban Service Committee Report, discussions with service providers, and the 2005-06 River Road/Santa Clara Transition Task Force, services such as police protection, sanitary sewer and water supply appear to be generally satisfactory (due to governance, condition of the infrastructure, and/or other factors). The real and perceived impacts of annexation and growth on certain other services - transportation, library, parks, fire service, and surface water - appear to be of greater concern for a variety of reasons. Some of these services originate with the City, some with Lane County, and some with special service districts.

Annexation and urban growth often brings new and more reliable water and sewer services, paved roads, improved public safety services, and new community facilities such as libraries and parks. Nonetheless, urbanization and annexation can also spell change in the form of more noise, busier streets, new and unfamiliar neighbors, the loss of trees and undeveloped open spaces (albeit some of these “open” spaces will be privately held, and not necessarily land suitable or available for the public domain), the demise of longstanding area institutions (both local public service providers and private businesses), and “forced” connections to sewer and water lines based on public health concerns. For those already living in areas recently or about to be annexed and redeveloped, such changes can quickly “sour” whatever positive benefits growth can bring. Development may increase feelings of an erosion of livability and community

heritage that perhaps started with prior annexations. In fact, even infrastructure improvements such as urban-level road upgrades may be perceived as reducing livability.

In reviewing the September 2002 Report of the Urban Services Committee, this latter form of reaction, perhaps engendered by perceived poor experiences with prior annexations in these two communities, and while not ubiquitous or universally held, appears to hold sway with many residents and stakeholders in River Road and Santa Clara. Additionally, many participants in the Urban Services Committee's work, who otherwise evidenced some support for the City, recognized that prior annexations and infrastructure improvements (e.g.: the required sewerage of the two communities in the 1980's) may not have necessarily been undertaken in the most effective or sensitive manner. Balancing this, most residents who participated in the 2002 effort appeared to understand that ultimately River Road and Santa Clara will fully urbanize and become part of the City of Eugene through annexation. The critical issues are how this occurs and within what timeframe.

As the City of Eugene, other service providers, and the two communities contemplate the future incorporation and development of the remaining territory within River Road and Santa Clara into the City, an community transition and heritage strategy that can be supported by, and that addresses the particular needs of, River Road and Santa Clara is an important initiative. A suite of strategies and actions that address the concerns of area residents, businesses and landowners with respect to their sense of community heritage, preservation of local institutions, loss of control and governance, and retention of some of the "look and feel" of the present day community, is appropriate. Such strategies and actions will help to better assure that when and if these communities join the City that they do so with the least dislocation and discontent possible. This White Paper outlines such a range of possible options and ideas that might for the basis of a set of community transition and heritage strategies and actions.

## **Assumptions and Limitations**

1. **Fiscal and Legal Implications.** The financial and tax implications of urbanization and annexation to the City of Eugene is not directly addressed by this White Paper. EcoNorthwest Inc. previously conducted such an analysis, and it is assumed that such implications of urbanization and annexation have been or will be assessed elsewhere. Similarly, an analysis of the legal and statutory options available to municipalities in the State of Oregon with respect to urbanization and annexation was not conducted, except insofar as community transition and heritage initiatives and options identified in this White Paper take into consideration the general limitations of such legal issues. In fact, statutes with respect to annexation were significantly amended by the State of Oregon Legislature while this White Paper was being drafted.
2. **The “Inevitability” of Urbanization and Annexation.** The goal of this White Paper is to identify strategies and actions that could foster and support a real sense that urbanization and eventual future annexation does not necessarily mean an absolute loss of heritage, control and community. This being said, practically all the potential actions outlined in the White Paper are annexation “neutral” – many options could be part of strategies and actions that the two the communities (or local governments) may want to pursue under ANY circumstances, and such options may be useful regardless of the current or future circumstances influencing the pace of annexation. The communities in question will, nonetheless, eventually become part of the City and its governance, based on the simple facts that River Road and Santa Clara are within the UGB, and that considerable parts of both neighborhoods are already annexed.
3. **Applicability within State Land Use Law.** Research focused on Oregon examples, and the recommended strategies and actions described in this White Paper are generally feasible under Oregon land use law and the stipulations of ORS 199 and 222, which govern annexation options in Oregon, and OAR 191, which is specific to the Lane County Boundary Commission, and other applicable State regulations and policies. A comprehensive legal and statutory compliance analysis of each option was, however, well outside the scope of this White Paper, and any selected options should be examined with the caveat that additional research and policy analysis may be required.
4. **Applicability within Local and Regional Policy.** Possible strategies and actions identified in this White Paper considered the policies and authorities of the City, and other impacted service providers, and take into account applicable regional policies and adopted plans accordingly. This does not mean, however, that potentially useful and effective options were omitted simply because they were contrary to an adopted local or regional policy. Differing from the above stated general standard for compliance with State statutes, non-compliance with adopted local or regional policy was not a “default” criteria for dropping a possible transition or heritage option. All things being otherwise equal, if the policy or ordinance changes necessary to make an otherwise effective action feasible were within the authority of local or regional government, such actions have been included.
5. **Comprehensive Nature of the Analysis.** This White Paper does not purport to explain each possible strategy or action in its entirety, or to be a complete and authoritative feasibility analysis for each. There are certainly other ideas out there that may be just as useful to the two communities. The options described herein appear to hold promise for the communities, but only the test of the public process will decide what works and what doesn’t. That will be the responsibility of the residents of River Road and Santa Clara, the City, County, other local service providers, and other impacted citizens and stakeholders. The White Paper is an outline of ideas that the two communities could promote – or local governments offer. The White Paper is a starting place – not a final “plan” or a “strategy”.

## **Structure and Process**

In developing the options/actions and associated advantages and challenges presented in this White Paper, the 2002 River Road/Santa Clara Urban Services Committee Report was the primary starting point, along with other city and regional plans and publications, in determining which services were most important to the two communities.

Written factual background summaries for selected services were presented to the impacted service provider(s) for review. The service providers were also asked to provide information updating activities and programs that perhaps were not in place when the published materials were developed. The consulting transition team (led by David Reed of David Reed and Associates, Springfield, Oregon) also listened carefully to the observations and concerns of the River Road/Santa Clara Transition Task Force, and at many other community forums where service delivery questions were discussed and debated. These forums included direct transition project activities, and other events relating to community issues that occurred during the course of the project.

Options/actions were developed by thinking about potential solutions to the community issues and concerns based on the consulting transition team's expertise and experience, by considering activities and programs already underway by local special service districts and general governments, by researching and understanding applicable solutions developed in other communities in Oregon, and by listening carefully to what was being said at Transition Task Force meetings and in other community forums and events.

The outcome of this approach is well over fifty different options/actions spread across twelve different services, nearly all with associated **"Advantages"** and **"Challenges"** summaries, and several with sections entitled **"What Another Community Has Done"**. The intent is to introduce as full of an "A to Z" set of potential options/actions as possible. The point of this White Paper was to present - but not select - ideas that might be useful to the two communities and the community service providers. Even if an option/action had significant practical limitations, using or reflecting on an element of a particular option might "improve" another. By presenting even those potential options/actions with major practical limitations to implementation, the two communities, the Task Force and local service providers are presented with good "sideboards" within which to hone in on the most feasible and useful options.

Services addressed in this White Paper include:

- Fire Protection and Emergency Medical Services
- Recreation Services
- Library Services
- Land Use Planning
- Neighborhood Governance
- Streets
- Parks, Open Space and Natural Areas
- Surface Water Management (Storm Water)
- Public Safety (Police Protection)
- Water Supply
- Sanitary Sewer
- Solid Waste Collection and Recycling

For most of the above services, an individual White Paper chapter including a separate evaluation and sets of specific options/actions has been prepared. Each chapter addressing a single service includes options classified as "Transition" and/or "Heritage". For some such services, the listed options/actions have been further classified as applying exclusively to River Road or Santa Clara, and in some cases "Miscellaneous" service options are identified. Specific community options are typically listed where one

or the other neighborhood is served by a single purpose special service district (such as River Road Parks and Recreation or Santa Clara Fire). Water supply, solid waste collection and recycling, public safety, and sanitary sewer services are consolidated into a single chapter, for reasons as explained in the introduction to that chapter (page 41).

The terms “Transition” and “Heritage” are generally defined as (please note that in some cases the choice of classification between a Transition or Heritage option will not always be absolute or clear cut):

1. **Transition** – An option that will assist the communities, City and/or a current service provider to effectively adjust to a gradual trend of annexation and urban development. Such options, while important, do have fewer or less direct benefits in preserving or enhancing traditional community governance, appearance, and institutions.
2. **Heritage** – An option which could have clear and direct benefits in preserving and/or enhancing traditional community governance, appearance, and institutions.

The reader is also cautioned to keep several things in mind in reviewing these service options:

1. The length and number of “**Advantages**” and “**Challenges**” listed for each option/action should not be seen as an indicator of the viability of a given option (e.g.: an option with six listed “challenges” and only two listed “advantages” is not necessarily the one that should be rejected).
2. Not all the options listed for a given service are intended to be supported or implemented (by the two communities, City and/or service providers). Choices will have to be made. Similarly, the implementation of options/actions for every service is not anticipated. Choices may perhaps have to be made to move forward with a relatively small suite of options/actions that best support community transition and heritage priorities. This should be determined through a public process including the broadest range of community interests and stakeholders.
3. Many potential options/actions, both within a given service category and between services, overlap and are inter-related. Others may tend to cancel each other out or conflict. Community residents and businesses, the City, and other service providers should use the options as starting points in developing effective transition and heritage strategies. There may even need to be a different set of strategies and actions for each community.

## **Benchmarks**

In undertaking research for this White Paper, and identifying potential strategies and actions that may work for the City of Eugene, other local service providers, and the communities of River Road and Santa Clara, six “unifying” categories were considered. Although the options/actions contained herein are listed by service type, they could as well have been listed by the categories below. These categories could potentially be “themes” around which one or more transition and heritage strategies coalesce. *Note: In many instances these categories will overlap. For example, options involving local fire protection service could be discussed in the context of Governance, Institutions, and/or Services.*

1. **Governance** – Options/actions that preserve, or perhaps create, processes that provide residents, business owners, and landowners in River Road and Santa Clara with a sense of community and of having an effective voice over their future.
2. **Institutions** – Options/actions that preserve or create institutions (such as community centers, volunteer fire brigades, etc.) that sustain or strengthen the distinct community identity of the urbanizing areas.
3. **Communications** – Options/actions that preserve or create outlets and processes for communicating within the two communities, not just for the purpose of assuring that residents know what is going on in the community, but to also foster a sense of distinct identity as well.
4. **Landscape** – Options/actions that allow urbanizing areas to preserve some of the physical attributes of a more rural or suburban community, such as differing street standards, open space, preservation of agricultural lands, lot and housing types, etc.
5. **Phasing** – Option/actions to phase or time incorporation within the benchmark of feasibility under Oregon statutes. This is not necessarily limited to physical phasing. For instance, the option/actions identified could be as simple as phasing of a City fee.
6. **Services** – Options/actions for services that are designed primarily to enhance current provisions in the urbanizing areas in ways that address existing community needs, not those of the fully developed “post-incorporation” community (but that still have “utility” for future residents and businesses).

Additionally, in identifying and analyzing the listed White Paper strategies and actions, the four major themes identified in the 2002 River Road/Santa Clara Urban Services Committee Report were used as “benchmarks” against which the relevance and potential effectiveness of each option was tested. The four themes/benchmarks as defined in the 2002 Report are:

- **Trust**
- **Voice**
- **Equity**
- **Collaboration**

These themes, having been distilled by the very people thinking and caring most deeply about the impact of urbanization and annexation on River Road and Santa Clara, and being based on what is perceived as having been unsatisfactory in the past, provided a unique opportunity to filter results through the lens of the two local communities.

A fifth benchmark used in this White Paper was **statutory and policy feasibility**, as described in the preceding **Assumptions and Limitations** chapter (page 3).



## **Developing a Transition and Heritage Strategy**

As indicated in the opening paragraph of this White Paper, the service options/actions identified are intended to be of equal usefulness to the two communities, the City, other service providers in fostering a creative dialogue on urbanization impacts and in reaching mutual agreement on effective strategies to sustain current and historic community institutions and heritage in the face of the changes brought about by urbanization. An effective means of building consensus and defining just what it means to “sustain current and historic community institutions and heritage” is through the development of a Transition and Heritage Strategy.

This White Paper is intended to be the starting point from which such a strategy or strategies (and associated set of implementing actions) can be established. Accordingly, and in the spirit of using this White Paper as a “handbook”, a few suggestions for structuring and working through a River Road/Santa Clara Transition and Heritage Strategy follow:

### **1. What’s the difference between an option (as presented in this White Paper) and a strategy?**

- An **option** is a focused change addressing a limited activity or a variation of a single service. The impact could be significant for the service, but doesn’t necessarily result in outcomes addressing larger community issues and goals.
- A **strategy** brings together a set of related options into groupings of action statements that can span several services, and that when taken together can advance long term community goals and desired outcomes.

### **2. Why create a strategy at all? Why not pick a set of options/actions and independently implement them?**

- Any option could be selected and worked on independently and “in the moment”, but the long term impacts might not be understood (or may prove to have been misunderstood).
- Communities are dynamic and complex entities, and rarely can problems (and effective solutions) be boiled down to a single issue or option.
- The risk is run that separately implemented options/actions may conflict with each other or cancel each other out. A strategy can reduce this risk.
- A strategy articulates a vision, and series of desired goals and outcomes, that will help the community stay focused on the “big picture” and to measure success.

### **3. What are the elements of an effective strategy?**

- The most effective strategy is based on a clearly stated and agreed to mission or vision and set of goals. A less effective strategy doesn’t include an agreed to mission and set of goals.
- An effective strategy has clear structure and boundaries – in this case perhaps the boundaries of River Road and Santa Clara communities and/or by limiting the strategy to just a couple of service areas (it might even turn out that the two communities warrant separate or somewhat overlapping strategies and actions).
- The strategy with the best chance of success is the one that ends up with a unified “theme” or “themes” and a set of desired outcomes consistent with the stated vision and goals. The Transition Task Force may wish to consider the six “unifying” categories defined under the **Benchmarks** section of this White Paper as a starting point in developing a theme or themes.
- Implementation actions that are clearly within the authority or ability of the group adopting the strategy are most effective. The more the group has to rely on others to implement a strategy or action, the more problematic things become. This will be a particular and major challenge for River Road and Santa Clara. The Transition Task Force is an ad-hoc

advisory committee formed by the consulting transition team that will end when the project ends (but presumably well before any agreed to strategies and actions can even begin to be implemented).

- The options/actions included in a strategy should relate to and support one another. Better yet, success for “Option A” should also have a direct positive impact on “Option D” and so forth. A strategy consisting of unrelated actions is little or no strategy at all.
- All that being said, there will always be trade-offs – don’t adopt a strategy that is so constrained by rules or processes or “lets be practical” that the “vision” is lost.

#### **4. Who would implement a strategy?**

- The River Road/Santa Clara Transition Task Force in and of itself does not have any authority to implement strategies and actions impacting services delivered service providers – except the authority of a well thought out and promoted strategy. The Task Force needs to consult early and often, and otherwise work closely with area service providers and community members to assure the timely and consistent implementation of any strategy.
- The Task Force needs to think tactically about what long-term and established group or groups are best positioned to carry forward its ideas – Community Organizations, Special Districts, County, City, etc. – and forge effective partnerships with these agencies.

#### **5. What measures or benchmarks might be used to decide which options/actions should become part of a strategy?**

- The benchmarks under in the 2002 Urban Services Committee Report – Trust, Voice, Equity, and Collaboration.
- The degree to which the selected options/actions are compatible with State law, regional policy, and local ordinances.
- The extent that options/actions are clearly feasible within the boundaries of the two communities.
- The elements of an effective strategy (as described under #3 above).
- The degree to which partners in advancing the strategy or action are to be found (see #4 above).
- At a “gut” level, do the options/actions just seem “feasible”.

## **Fire Protection & Emergency Medical Services (EMS)**

### **Current Situation**

#### **River Road**

Fire protection and emergency medical service (EMS) in the River Road community is provided to both in-City and non-City residents and businesses by the City of Eugene Fire and Emergency Services Department. Service to non-City residents and businesses in this community is accomplished via a contract with the River Road Water District, an arrangement based on the need for a local governmental contracting partner and (presumably) the central role of adequate water supply in fire suppression. A small area of the River Road community west of North Eugene High School is serviced by the Santa Clara Rural Fire Protection District (hereinafter called Santa Clara Fire). There are no City or Fire District fire stations in River Road, although a new City station opened nearby in the Santa Clara community in mid-2005, and Santa Clara Rural Fire's Station No. 1 is also nearby.

#### **Santa Clara**

Santa Clara Fire provides fire protection and emergency medical services (EMS) to non-City properties in the Santa Clara community that are primarily east of Stark Street and north of Beltline Road (although there is some territory west of Stark at the far north of the neighborhood that is served by Santa Clara Fire). Santa Clara Fire has two fire stations along the Santa Clara community stretch of River Road, one close to Beltline Road and a northerly station near Awbrey Park.

Santa Clara Fire also serves properties outside of the Urban Growth Boundary (and the official Santa Clara community boundary) to the north and to the east, but this territory is relatively lightly populated (approximately 200 homes out of the 4,500 in the entire Santa Clara Fire service area). Continued annexation of Santa Clara community properties to the City, or a withdrawal of service by Santa Clara Fire to only areas outside of the UGB, could obviously spell the end of this Fire District. Santa Clara Fire District management also indicates that the City decision in 2002 to provide direct fire protection services to Santa Clara's in-City properties, rather than contract with the District, created a significant fiscal imbalance between District revenues and the cost of continued service to the balance of the out-of-City community. In 2003, the Fire District began to use cash reserves to balance its annual operating budget. In addition, since much of the newly annexed territory in Santa Clara has been previously undeveloped, annexation has not significantly reduced Fire District call volume, even as tax revenues decline.

Lane Rural Fire/Rescue (hereinafter referred to as Lane Rural) serves a smaller area of non-City properties within the Santa Clara community west of Stark Street. Lane Rural operates four stations, with the closest to the Santa Clara community being located west of the Northwest Expressway at Irvington Street, just outside the official community boundary. In addition to fire suppression and EMS, Lane Rural has provided ambulance service in Santa Clara for over 20 years. Lane Rural also includes the Northwest Industrial Corridor, and a large rural, unincorporated area outside of the UGB (representing about 70-75% of the entire area of this Fire District). The "high value" industrial property within Lane Rural makes a substantial contribution to the Fire District's relatively low tax rate for the level of services offered, and also means, in contrast to Santa Clara Fire, that Lane Rural could more easily survive the City's ongoing annexation of the District's service territory within the Santa Clara community.

For many years, Eugene Fire contracted with these two Fire Districts to also protect in-City properties in the Santa Clara community. The City elected in July 2002 to provide direct fire protection and EMS to in-City residents and businesses, and established a temporary fire station in Santa Clara. A new City fire station opened in the Santa Clara community in the mid-2005.

Presently, Lane Rural has a "first response" agreement with Eugene Fire that assumes that first response from Eugene will balance first response from Lane Rural (e.g.: there is no monetary exchange for calls). Santa Clara Fire and Eugene have a similar agreement (Eugene however compensates Santa Clara for "first response" calls to City residents). The incidence of "first response" calls declined when Eugene Fire

opened its interim fire station in 2002, and this decline should continue and perhaps accelerate with the opening of the permanent City fire station in mid-2005.

Both Lane Rural and Santa Clara Fire have a volunteer firefighter component supporting fire protection services, and both Fire Districts assert that volunteers are essential to providing viable fire protection service to the community. The City of Eugene cannot permit City volunteer firefighters based on its current collective bargaining agreement with the firefighters union. This particular provision has been in place for approximately 15 years. Lane Rural has a collective bargaining agreement with the same union but has nonetheless continued to sustain a volunteer service. Recently, the Eugene Fire Chief stated that there may be ways to include volunteer firefighters in the City service were either one of the two Fire Districts cease operations.

In the past, Lane Rural and Santa Clara Fire have considered the possibility of a merger, but these talks did not yield such an outcome. Lane Rural has expressed concern that a merger with Santa Clara Fire could eventually (if the pace of annexation continues) result in a higher tax rate for the consolidated district than the taxation level presently enjoyed by the property owners within Lane Rural. This circumstance could result if "out-of-UGB" residential properties are all that remain from the original Santa Clara Fire District. In recent discussions with the two Fire Districts and with Eugene City Fire, all agreed that a merger of Lane Rural and Santa Clara Fire would not solve the current financial challenges particularly faced by Santa Clara Fire, and may in fact worsen and accelerate revenue shortfalls.

## **Transition and Heritage Options**

### **River Road**

Insofar as there are no fire districts servicing the River Road community, the question of transition and heritage strategies in this area appear almost moot. Nonetheless, the issue of the continued viability of the River Road Water District, which both maintains local waterlines and retails water (obtained from the Eugene Water and Electric Board) to non-City properties, and contracts for City fire protection for those same non-City properties, provides reason to consider some transition or heritage options. If the Water District were to go out of business, there would be no local community institution via which the City could pass-through fire services to non-City properties (except theoretically the River Road Parks and Recreation District – which is an unlikely prospect).

### **Transition Options**

- **Option No. 1: EWEB Contract** - The City and the Eugene Water and Electric Board (EWEB) negotiate a contingency agreement for River Road fire protection services, with EWEB assuming the current role of the Water District, if the River Road Water District were to cease operations.

**Advantages:** *EWEB is a firmly established governmental agency, and would not face a shrinking customer and tax base such as the River Road Water District will experience as incorporation continues apace.*

**Challenges:** *The role of fire service contractor may not interest EWEB*

- **Option No. 2: Fire District Contract** – The City contracts with Santa Clara Fire or Lane Rural to protect unincorporated residents and businesses in River Road (again only if the River Road Water District were to cease operations).

**Advantages:** *May help to sustain local institutions (e.g.: the two fire districts) already in the business of fire protection*

**Challenges:** *Neither Santa Clara Fire nor Lane Rural may have the operational capacity to expand to River Road, nor the ability to develop needed physical infrastructure; Eugene Fire is expanding in the general area already (e.g.: new Santa Clara City fire station)*

- **Option No. 3: City Provides Non-City Fire Protection Service without Pass-Through Contract** - The logical conclusion once all properties within River Road are incorporated (but one that creates issues of equity until that happens – see **Challenges** below)

**Advantages:** *City is already the provider for all residents and businesses in River Road, either directly or through contract with the local water district*

**Challenges:** *Absent another solution (see above), if the River Road Water District were to cease operations before the community was fully incorporated, the City may be placed in the difficult circumstance of being compelled to provide service to non-City properties in consideration of overarching public safety concerns, but without any form of compensation*

### **Heritage Options**

- **None** – Eugene Fire is already the service provider for all fire protection and EMS to all residents and businesses in River Road. There are essentially no “heritage” services or characteristics to be sustained for this service (except perhaps that a Santa Clara Fire or Lane Rural expansion into River Road might help sustain those two Fire Districts as the amount of non-City property shrinks due to incorporation).

### **Santa Clara**

A significant transition is already underway in Santa Clara with the opening of the City’s new fire station in 2005 (and the City’s prior decision in 2002 to provide direct service to in-City residents and businesses in this neighborhood). This change in service policy ended the City’s payment to Santa Clara Fire to provide fire calls to in-City residents in the community. The loss of this funding has resulted in Santa Clara Fire operating at a deficit since 2003, and having to “backfill” its annual operating budget with now gradually declining cash reserves.

### **Transition Options**

- **Option No. 1: Continue Current Fire District Services** – Lane Rural and Santa Clara Fire continue to provide fire protection and EMS services to all non-City properties within their respective zones until such time as the community is fully incorporated.

**Advantages:** *Sustains two institutions and governance options with a long-standing presence in the community (including the volunteer fire service)*

**Challenges:** *The expanded presence of Eugene Fire (e.g.: direct service to City residents by Eugene Fire rather than contract service thru the two Fire Districts) combined with gradually decreasing fire district service territories and changing service needs and costs may test the two District’s viability and resources (most particularly Santa Clara Fire).*

- **Option No. 2: Fire Districts Serve Entire Community** – The assumption of service to in-City properties by Eugene Fire in 2002, combined with the construction of a new City fire station in Santa Clara renders this option practically moot.

- **Option No. 3: Expand Fire District Services** – Santa Clara Fire and/or Lane Rural contracts with the City to once again provide services to all in-City properties in the Santa Clara community, and/or potentially to take over the City’s contract with the River Road Water District for fire protection in the River Road community. *Again, the circumstance described in the preceding Option No. 2 may make this alternative essentially moot.*

**Advantages:** *Creates a uniform agency and level of fire service between the two communities; sustains important community institution(s) and local governance opportunity*

**Challenges:** *Requires a highly unlikely reversal on the part of the City of Eugene with respect to fire service to in-City properties in Santa Clara; the resources of Santa Clara Fire and/or Lane Rural may be overextended by such an expansion.*

- **Option No. 4: City Assumes Service to All Santa Clara Properties** – The two Fire Districts serving the Santa Clara community withdraw from all direct fire protection and EMS service to non-City properties inside the Urban Growth Boundary (UGB), and the City contracts with the Santa Clara Water District to “pass-through” fire service to the entire community (as is presently done in the River Road community with the River Road Water District).

**Advantages:** *Puts local fire service within the UGB under a single provider; as annexation proceeds Eugene Fire will eventually be the sole provider anyway.*

**Challenges:** *Potentially important local institutions, such as the volunteer firefighter corps, will be lost; a form of local community governance (service on district boards) is also lost; the Santa Clara Fire in particular is left with significantly reduced territory to serve and would probably no longer be financially viable; issues surrounding the continued long-term viability of the Santa Clara Water District are similar to circumstances with River Road Water District (see Option No. 3 above); the Santa Clara Water District may not have an interest in being a fire service contractor.*

- **Option No. 5: Lane Rural and Santa Clara Fire Merge** – Such an option could be combined with the expansion, status quo or withdrawal options described above. As described under “Current Situation” above, this option has been discussed previously between the two Fire Districts, and has potentially serious negative consequences. In a scenario where most of Santa Clara Fire’s territory within the UGB is annexed to City of Eugene, a merger with Lane Rural may be the only practical way for remaining homes within the former Santa Clara Fire District to receive fire service.

**Advantages:** *Reduces the number of fire service providers in the community, helps to sustain a locally governed institution (including volunteer brigades); avoids the issue of some out-of-UGB residents losing fire protection services*

**Challenges:** *Prior merger discussions have not been successful; ultimately a merged district's tax rate could increase over current rates, potentially resulting in reduced services; merger would not stop the pace of annexation and the resultant decline in territory serviced by the merged Fire District*

### **Heritage Options**

The preceding transition options beg the question for what is may be the biggest “heritage” factor in community-based local fire service: the fate of the corps of community members that come together to protect their neighbor’s lives and property through volunteer service with the two Fire Districts. *Note: the following options would of necessity have to be made in concert with other decisions to continue or modify fire district services within the UGB.*

- **Option No. 1: Let the Volunteer Services Lapse** – The two Fire Districts, faced with a potentially declining local recruitment base (e.g.: residents of non-City properties within their service territories are declining because the pace of annexation is quickening), could simply allow the volunteer corps to lapse over time. *Note: Lane Rural claims to be very successful in recruiting volunteers from outside of its service territory, thus mitigating some of this concern.*

**Advantages:** *None (to the Fire Districts) although some current administrative and training costs may not be incurred; City would not have to create a volunteer service (as per options below).*

**Challenges:** *May create staffing shortages for the Fire Districts that can only be mitigated by increased payroll; means the end of long established community institutions*

- **Option No. 2: Sustain the Current Volunteer Services** - From the perspective of preserving community heritage there is less to be gained by working to sustain a volunteer corps that primarily serves as the training and testing ground for future paid professionals. This may make this option more or less important within the context of a community heritage strategy depending on the emphasis and needs of the two Fire Districts in recruiting volunteers.

**Advantages:** *Sustains an important outlet for community involvement; keeps Fire District operational costs down*

**Challenges:** *The “pool” of potential volunteers may shrink as more property in Santa Clara is annexed (see caveat under Option No. 1 above)*

- **Option No. 3: Create Eugene Fire Volunteer Service** - As Eugene Fire currently has no volunteer firefighter program, this may be a considerable institutional change for this City service (especially since the current City collective bargaining agreement prohibits a volunteer firefighters). Nonetheless, there is no essential difference between a fire service volunteer program and volunteer programs in library, parks, and other services, and this is something many cities encourage and promote, except of course for the much greater probability that fire service volunteers will be faced with life threatening and liability incurring situations.

**Advantages:** *Provides an outlet for present and future residents who wish to volunteer in the area of public safety; indirectly sustains a current Santa Clara community institution*

**Challenges:** *Eugene currently has no volunteer service, and such an option may not “fit” financially or operationally within City Fire Department plans; the City’s current collective bargaining agreement will not allow the City to “employ” volunteer firefighters.*

### **Miscellaneous Options**

- **Miscellaneous Fire Option No. 1: Community Meeting Space** - Another potential “heritage” option for the fire service, albeit unrelated to the volunteer institution, but relevant to sustaining community activity centers, is for fire station facilities to incorporate community and event meeting space (such as available at the River Road Parks and Recreation District facility). A “Phase 2” expansion of the City’s new fire station would include such meeting space, and Santa Clara Fire’s Station No. 2 near Awbrey Park has a community meeting room.

**Advantages:** *Provides a highly visible and stable gathering place for community activities; reinforces the role of the “fire hall” as a community center (and perhaps encourages expanded community involvement in volunteer service, etc.)*

**Challenges:** *Current City fire service facilities do not have the space or staffing to accommodate regular community meetings and events*

### **What Another Community Has Done**

There are numerous examples that can be found of fire districts that provide the sole fire protection and EMS service within incorporated cities. *Tualatin Valley Fire and Rescue (TVFR)* in Washington County, Oregon provides fire protection and EMS services in unincorporated county areas and in several incorporated cities, and currently maintains six fire stations with volunteer components. As TVFR has grown, several all-volunteer fire brigades and stations have been absorbed into the District and a serious commitment has been made to sustain and employ this volunteer contingent. As with any volunteer opportunity, success and longevity depend on clear guidelines, training, and real work responsibilities being provided to the volunteer corps.

## **Library Services**

### **Current Situation**

There appears to be two primary community issues with respect to library services in River Road and Santa Clara. First, there are no public library facilities in either community, irrespective of the potential operating jurisdiction (city, county or special district) or status of a community member as an in-City or non-City resident. There are actually only three City library branches in all of Eugene, thus while the lack of a branch within either Santa Clara or River Road may be an issue with local residents, there are many other neighborhoods in Eugene in similar circumstances. The nearest City library is within an approximate 15 minute drive of the two communities – the City’s Bethel branch library west of Highway 99.

Second, non-City residents do not have the option of using their “own” (e.g.: Lane County) library service at all, simply because Lane County does not provide library services. The non-profit Lane Library League has promoted the idea of library district(s) in the County, and in 2005 voters approved the formation of a library district in the Creswell community coincident with the local school district boundary. This localized service does not, however, benefit River Road and Santa Clara residents (although it may provide the “seed” for longer term regional options to library services). Thus, all River Road and Santa Clara residents must leave their neighborhoods to access library services, and non-City residents must incur the expense of purchasing non-resident library cards from the City (although this is true for all non-residents wishing to use Eugene’s library facilities).

A new – and small - volunteer library opened in mid-2005 in the River Road Water District building just off of River Road. This volunteer effort has been supported by the Lane Library League and friends of the Eugene Library and has received in-kind professional advice from City Library staff and other in-kind support. The volunteer library has also benefited from support from the two neighborhoods in the form of cash donations, in-kind assistance, and book donations. The volunteer library is currently open for limited hours, four days a week.

The most basic library service need and question is and will probably always remain, “where is my local community branch?” Current City library expansion plans do not identify either River Road or Santa Clara communities as a top priority for a new branch library (a new branch in southwest Eugene is “top-rated”), nor do long-range plans contemplate anything like a library branch in every Eugene neighborhood. In the absence of a community library branch, programs such as access provisions for special populations, or in-kind or other support for the new volunteer library, could have positive impacts with respect to actual and perceived library service levels in River Road and Santa Clara.

### **Transition and Heritage Options**

#### **Transition Options**

Given the lack of “direct” (exclusively in the sense of there being no Santa Clara or River Road branch library) library services in either community, transition options are limited.

**Option No. 1: Fee Reductions or Waivers** – A fee-for-card approach mitigates tax inequity issues for non-City residents using City facilities, although it does not mitigate any “ability to pay” issues, something theoretically accommodated by a tax supported public service. “Improving” access to library services for special populations (seniors, youth) through fee reductions or waivers could be considered. Special access provisions for youth cards have been previously considered but rejected by the Eugene City Council.

**Advantages:** *Provides tangible evidence of City support for local community needs; costs to the City could be relatively low; recognizes that there are special needs populations meriting special consideration*



**Challenges:** *May generate equity concerns among City residents; a “special populations” policy would have to be applied City-wide; costs may be low in comparison to other City operational budgets, but may be high within the context of the City library budget.*

**Option No. 2: Support for Volunteer Library** – There are already some mutual support activities (such as in-kind professional advice) underway between the volunteer library and the City. The City may wish to consider an agreement with the volunteer library group for other support such as shared circulations, priority call at surplus book sales or donations, and access to surpluses computers (or City computer “buys”).

**Advantages:** *Provides tangible evidence of City support for a new local community institution; costs to the City’s overall budget could be relatively negligible*

**Challenges:** *Costs in the context of the City Library budget could be more significant; the City already gives preference to friends of the Library for surplus books*

**Option 3: “Storefront” Library** – Library services could be located and operated as part of existing community institutions and facilities (such as the River Road Parks and Recreation District). Location within schools or other public buildings might also be considered, as well as in separate commercial building space, or even as part of the space occupied by a specific commercial business.

“Storefront” services could range from simple drop off/pick up depots, to the once more common book-mobile (an option that has declined over time due to high relative costs in most communities), to computerized book kiosks within commercial businesses, to leased or donated space (although this last option would save only on any initial capital costs of a new branch library building).

**Advantages:** *A potentially lower cost (compared to a full branch library) to provide physical library services in the two communities; potential for cooperation and strengthening of existing community institutions (such as the Parks District or volunteer library)*

**Challenges:** *Operational costs may not be within the means of the City Library budget; a storefront library program may have to be developed City-wide and River Road and Santa Clara may not be the “first in line”*

### **Heritage Options**

As the only library service for the River Road and Santa Clara communities is either through the City’s Library or through the start-up Santa Clara volunteer library, it may appear to be inconsistent to discuss any library services alternative as a heritage option, in the sense that “heritage” implies a well established local resource or characteristic meriting preservation. Nonetheless, given the limited number of institutions in either community that provide for place-named centers of community activity and gathering, options that could facilitate the creation of such centers are appropriately considered under this heading.

- **Option No. 1: Multi-jurisdictional Library Cooperative** – Regional library districts, or library cooperatives consisting of county, city and special libraries, have been formed in many communities. The Lane Library League has been promoting this idea. Such co-ops may be underwritten (in part at least) by regional library tax measures, and participating libraries may be compensated for circulations to parties in other jurisdictions by “per circ” reimbursements funded by the tax measures. This tax option is easiest to implement if there is already a jurisdiction providing library service region-wide (e.g.: a county), although there are no technical (but probably many policy or budget) reasons why Lane County could not “sponsor” a co-op.

It would be an open question whether a co-op consisting of the city libraries of Eugene, Springfield and Junction City would deliver enough “critical mass”. The addition of the recently approved Creswell library district and other districts in the future (perhaps encompassing many smaller communities in Lane County), could help provide such critical mass. In the long-term, a library cooperative might also generate the capital for the expansion of physical libraries, although

in co-op examples identified in Oregon, the individual co-op members retain primary responsibility for their own capital needs.

**Advantages:** *Eliminates equity issues of City or non-City residency, everyone would be citizen of the cooperative; the potentially larger tax base, broader population demographics, and larger geographic area of the co-op may facilitate taxpayer support; at least initially the co-op can be formed and grow through intergovernmental agreements (e.g.: a new special district does not necessarily have to be voted in)*

**Challenges:** *It is not within the authority of the City to create such an entity on its own, negotiations with multiple groups could be protracted; in Lane County it may not be as simple as to start with intergovernmental agreements "binding" together existing institutions covering most of the possible new service territory; formation of a co-op would not necessarily lead to library branches being physically located in River Road or Santa Clara (or anywhere else for that matter).*

- **Option No. 2: City Branch Library** - Probably most central to the perceived library service needs and aspirations of the River Road and Santa Clara communities is the lack of a branch library in either area. Nonetheless, with only three library facilities in the City, it would appear to be hard to argue that the lack of a library branch in these two communities is any greater inequity than for other parts of the City. The capital or lease cost of a new library branch, combined with an estimated (by the City) annual operating cost of \$600,000, does not appear to bode well for new branch facilities in River Road or Santa Clara (or anywhere else in the City) in the near future. Furthermore, the library co-op model discussed in Heritage Option No. 1 above would not in and of itself solve this problem.

**Advantages:** *"Solves" the most central issue in one action; provides the physical facility for what will probably be the "ultimate" library service provider; provides a potential community "center".*

**Challenges:** *Prioritization of a new branch would probably have to be an outcome of a City-wide process; even if prioritized, the capital or lease funding (and operational costs) of a new branch library may not be available*

### **What Another Community Has Done**

In other regions, multi-jurisdictional library co-ops have been most typically formed where there is an existing county service and a multiplicity of city libraries. This is not the case in Lane County, where there is no county system, and few city systems. The *Washington County (Oregon) Cooperative Library System* is a long established (mid-1980's) example of such a cooperative. It must be cautioned that the Washington County co-op is distinguished from the Lane County situation in that the co-op came on the scene with a full roster of member city library departments and library buildings already in place. Nevertheless, a co-op may be something to consider, especially as it could draw in county taxpayers to the library funding picture. *Clackamas County (Oregon)* has also formed a city/county library cooperative and been successful in securing taxpayer support in the past. Both these cooperatives have had funding measures rejected by the voters in the recent past.

## **Community Governance**

### **Current Situation**

Governance is not a “service” in the sense of the other services – parks, fire protection, planning, water supply, etc. - discussed as transition and heritage options in this White Paper. Governance per se was also not identified as a stand-alone topic in the 2002 River Road/Santa Clara Urban Services Committee Report. Nonetheless, effective community governance is a benchmark both in the 2002 Committee Report and in many of the ideas presented in this White Paper, such as formation of a library cooperative, sustaining existing special service districts, etc.

There are two community governance ideas which merit discussion outside of the specific framework of any of the particular urban service options described in this White Paper – City Council representation, and the authority of City-recognized Community Organizations. City residents within the two communities can participate fully in City governance, up to and including service on City elected and appointed bodies. All area residents can do the same for County bodies and programs. Notwithstanding this, and given the annexation and urbanization transitions that Santa Clara and River Road are going through, most community attention will primarily focus now and in the future on City actions, programs and policies.

The Eugene City Council identified “launch a neighborhood initiative” as one of their eight priority issues for 2005, and is currently considering an action plan defining this initiative. This could be a potential vehicle for changes to community governance in the River Road and Santa Clara communities (and for many of the other options discussed elsewhere in this White Paper).

#### **River Road**

River Road is completely within a single City of Eugene Council ward (Ward #7). Most of the River Road community is in County Commission District #4 (a small portion is in District #1). The River Road Community Organization has been very active. In addition, River Road has its own parks and recreation district and local water supply special service district.

#### **Santa Clara**

Santa Clara is split between two wards (Wards #7 and #5) along the axis of River Road. This community is represented at the County by Commission District #1. The Santa Clara Community Organization is active; and Santa Clara is served by two fire districts (Santa Clara Fire and Lane Rural) and a local water supply special service district.

## **Transition and Heritage Options**

### **Transition Options**

In the sense that sustaining or improving community governance can sustain the heritage of a community, all such options are discussed below as such.

### **Heritage Options**

- **Option No. 1: City Council Representation** - Equal representation and population requirements often render it impossible to make political boundaries coincident with community boundaries. Nonetheless, action by the City to re-apportion Council wards, either by including both communities within a single ward, or by having the dividing line along the axis of Beltline Road (thus making the ward boundaries more consistent with accepted community boundaries) might make area residents feel their access to City elected officials was improved (or at least simpler). There could be a similar adjustment by the County to divide Districts #1 and #4 completely along Beltline Road. The City did a major reapportionment after the 2000 census which reduced the

number of Council wards in the area from three to two, but in the normal course of events would not undertake another change until after the 2010 Census.

The current in-City areas of River Road and Santa Clara do not have enough population to establish wards coincident with official community boundaries. A large scale annexation in the two communities that brought in a significant number of new citizens to the City could merit a “mid-decade” reapportionment. The City could under such circumstances elect to reapportion the wards prior to the next census, using adjusted results from 2000. Current City wards contain approximately 17,500 persons per ward, so it would require a very large annexation and development to be merited, for example all annexation of all the remaining unincorporated territory in River Road.

**Advantages:** *Makes community access to elected officials “simpler”; allows the neighborhoods to speak as “one voice” to “one elected representative”.*

**Challenges:** *“One person, one vote” requirements and population distribution and numbers may not make re-apportionment as described herein feasible until after 2010 or longer.*

- **Option No. 2: Community Organization Recognition** - The City has provided “limited” recognition to the River Road and Santa Clara Community Organizations, even though these two organizations also represent a substantial number of non-City residents. Presently, “limited recognition” means that City funding for public information and newsletters is pro-rated based on the percentage of in-City residents in the neighborhood, and the City does not provide staff or financial support for any Community Organization outreach activities or supplies.

The City might want to consider full (or fuller) Community Organization recognition for Santa Clara and River Road, even though these two communities are not fully annexed to the City (simply as a goodwill gesture if nothing else). The City could also consider lowering the threshold for full Community Organization recognition.

**Advantages:** *Treats the two communities as full (or fuller) members of the larger City community, which over time they are expected to become; builds goodwill.*

**Challenges:** *May raise equity issues with other Community Organizations that already represent fully annexed neighborhoods.*

- **Option No. 3: Expand Community Organization Responsibilities** – The City could examine ways to further “empower” Community Organizations by sending a variety of City policy and program decisions to the Community Organization for review and recommendations.

**Advantages:** *Gives the local communities a more direct voice in a variety of City decision-making actions; could attract a wider variety of citizens to serve on Community Organization boards and participate in meetings*

**Challenges:** *Would have to be a policy applied City-wide to Community Organizations; adds another step to City decision-making processes (and potentially one than could take a long time to complete); any Community Organization recommendations would be advisory (which could add to discontent if recommendations aren’t followed); may be practically difficult to sort out issues that are appropriate to refer to the Community Organizations*

- **Option No. 4: Sustain Existing Special Districts** – As noted above and elsewhere in this White Paper, both communities have a number of local special service districts – parks, fire, and water – that continue provide important services within the community. This circumstance is probably an important contributor to the continued strong sense of community in both River Road and Santa Clara, even as incorporation and development changes the areas from rural to urban/suburban. Please see specific transition and heritage options regarding these special service districts (and **Advantages** and **Challenges**) elsewhere in this White Paper.

## **Parks, Open Space and Natural Areas**

### **Current Situation**

Parks, Open Space and Natural Areas are addressed separately from Recreation Services for three reasons. The current forms of local delivery of these services suggests a logical division between recreation and parks (for instance the City operates parks services out of the Public Works Department, and recreation services out of a Recreation, Library and Cultural Services Department). Secondly, open space preservation (and/or the gradual disappearance of open space even if such space is simply privately owned “fallow” land of no distinct conservation or agricultural value) is a key “driver” in how residents of communities in transition react to growth. Finally, the proximity of both communities to the Willamette River Greenway; and, in the case of the Santa Clara community, proximity to the Eugene/Springfield Urban Growth Boundary (UGB), provide unique opportunities for preserving open spaces that can help to sustain elements of the two communities rural heritage.

As discussed in more detail under the Recreation section of this White Paper, the River Roads Parks and Recreation District provides recreation services and maintains one park and recreation center (Emerald Park) in the River Road community, but does not otherwise manage open spaces or natural areas. River Road Parks does provide some recreation programs off-site in leased facilities. There is no comparable special service district serving the Santa Clara community. The City operates its parks and open space services and facilities through a division of the Public Works Department. Lane County also provides parks services, and is the operator of two riverside boat landings on the Willamette River adjacent to the Santa Clara community.

The City is undertaking or planning numerous parks upgrades and acquisitions in the River Road and Santa Clara communities, primarily utilizing development-generated system development charge (SDC) funds and the 1998 City parks and open space bond measure to fund these improvements. The City is presently concluding an update of its Parks, Recreation, and Open Space Comprehensive Plan, which includes a proposed community park in Santa Clara, a number of neighborhood park acquisitions, and a linear park and natural area along the Willamette River. The City is also in the process of completing a natural features inventory, to comply with new rules required by Statewide Planning Goal 5, with particular emphasis on wetlands and stream corridors. A stream corridor acquisition program is funded through stormwater user fees, with several priority acquisitions in the Santa Clara area.

In addition, the Metropolitan Wastewater Management Commission (provider of regional sanitary sewer services) has acquired a large amount of open space north of the Santa Clara community and outside of the UGB for poplar farms, biosolids management, and seasonal wastewater treatment. Given the uses contemplated for these Wastewater Commission sites, however, public usage as accessible open space may obviously be greatly limited, if not altogether proscribed.

Finally, a proposal was under public review in 2005 for a UGB “land swap” and development agreement involving properties both within the Santa Clara community and in another part of the City that would secure a new 77 acre site in the northwest portion of the Santa Clara community. Some residents of the Santa Clara community have proposed an alternative park and recreation development scenario. Currently this land swap proposal has been shelved.

### **River Road**

The Willamette River Greenway immediately abuts the eastern edge of the River Road community from a wastewater treatment plant in the northeast corner of the community to the community's southernmost boundary. Except for one small privately owned lot, the City's 67 acres of river Greenway is continuous and adjacent to the River Road community, and a west bank pedestrian and bikeway has been constructed for most of this length. Greenway improvements and facilities such as river access points and

facilities, signage, and other park activity nodes are otherwise limited. There are three named parks associated with the Greenway – Rasor, Jacobs, and Westbank - with parking improvements, restrooms, and a picnic area (at Jacobs).

In addition to active sports fields associated with schools, there are three major parks in River Road – Emerald Park (operated by the River Road Parks and Recreation District); the 5-acre Bramblewood Park operated as a neighborhood park by the City; and the City's future 20-acre Walnut Grove Park, a "natural area" including a pond and stream and western pond turtle habitat. In addition, there is the smaller Rosetta Place Park, a 1.2 acre neighborhood park. City parks (including the Greenway) are maintained and operated out of the Parks and Open Space Division of the City Public Works Department. Mapping would indicate that with a few exceptions, most natural stream corridors, open water, and wetlands in the River Road community have been significantly altered or eliminated by prior development.

### **Santa Clara**

In contrast to the River Road community, the eastern boundary of the Santa Clara community does not immediately abut the Willamette River – considerable acreage of larger farm and estate tracts sit between Santa Clara and the river. These intervening tracts are also outside of the Eugene/Springfield UGB. Greenway lands have not been acquired in this area, and therefore no trails or Greenway public facilities presently exist, although Lane County does own and operate two riverside facilities – Whitely Landing and Hillman Landing.

The Santa Clara community does not have a local parks and recreation district as is the case with River Road. The City does own and operate several parks in the Santa Clara community. These parks are managed out of the Parks and Open Space Division of the City Public Works Department. The largest and oldest is Awbrey Park which was recently renovated with 1998 parks bond funds. This park includes neighborhood park facilities, natural areas and a stream corridor (Spring Creek). The 6-acre Arrowhead Park is also slated for a mixed neighborhood park/natural development and includes a portion of Flat Creek. Other City parks in Santa Clara include Terra Linda, Lone Oak, Filbert Meadows, Ferndale and Wendover. Mapping would indicate that, with a few exceptions, most natural stream corridors, open water, and wetlands have been significantly altered or eliminated by prior development.

## **Transition and Heritage Options**

The City could provide services that would facilitate the urban transition of the River Road and Santa Clara communities by engaging in acquisitions that preserve lands for a range of open space activities – significant natural areas, river access, neighborhood parks, and sports fields. Even the preservation of ordinary woodlots and farm fields can provide a feeling that the community is securing some of its rural heritage. Communities can both grow in population AND sustain significant open space resources by identifying and designating a wide range of remaining natural systems, by adopting policies that call for such lands to be preserved either by government acquisition or by set-asides in the development process, and by designing creative compensation policies for landowners through SDC credits, density transfers and the like. The system can in part become "self-perpetuating" once the development community experiences the added value accruing to developable lands abutting the resource lands they have "bypassed" or dedicated as an outcome of City and community heritage policies.

An important consideration in any open space transition and heritage strategies is integration with other transition and heritage options. In the case of this "Parks, Open Space and Natural Areas" section of this White Paper, a significant opportunity exists for integration with surface water management plans and programs. Surface water master planning is underway by the City and Lane County, as is periodic review of the City's comprehensive plan including protections for specified stream corridors for both open space and surface water quality and quantity benefits. Open space preservation goals can be strengthened by considering surface water benefits and vice versa. Please see the separate "Surface Water Management", "Streets" and "Land Use Planning" chapters of this White Paper for additional discussion.

*Please note: For the Parks, Open Space and Natural Areas section of this White Paper, transition and heritage options are not sorted by specific community. In addition, some options discussed under the Recreation chapter of this White Paper may be suitable for joint implementation with the Parks, Open Space and Natural Area options discussed below.*

### **Transition Options**

The transition options identified below are those that, while relevant to the current River Road and Santa Clara situations, could be applied in any areas in the City, and that don't necessarily have a direct impact in sustaining a community's rural "look and feel". In addition, as noted above and under the "Land Use Planning" and "Surface Water Management" chapters of this White Paper, prior development has altered or eliminated most continuous stream corridors in these two communities, and left relatively few undeveloped tracts of any sort within the current UGB. Therefore options for additional open space preservation may be limited, at least beyond those being identified by current City parks planning processes and negotiations.

**Option No. 1: Park and Open Space Upgrades and Acquisitions** - Continue to upgrade existing parks and open spaces, and/or acquire new parks and open spaces as development processes and associated development dedications, credits, and System Development Charge (SDC) collections allow.

**Advantages:** *City already has a program underway funded by SDC's and parks bonds; builds on the resources already established in the communities; development dedications require no or low out of pocket costs*

**Challenges:** *Properties available through development dedications may not necessarily be those of most "value" with respect to community "heritage" or long range City plans; in Santa Clara such an approach does not address the potential for an extension of the Willamette River Greenway, as this section is outside the UGB, and not subject to City development regulations.*

**Option No. 2: Designation of Parks Capital Funding** – The City could set aside the SDC funds collected in River Road and Santa Clara, and dedicate said funds exclusively to local community park capital projects and land acquisitions.

**Advantages:** *Assures locally generated SDC parks fees are spent locally; potentially expands the capacity of the City (and in the case of River Road, the Parks and Recreation District) to serve these two communities.*

**Challenges:** *Level of SDC's are calculated based on entire City need, and allocation to the communities may be contrary to overall parks capital plans; State statutes governing SDC calculations may not allow such a segregation; segregation of parks funding in this manner may set a precedent that other City areas may want to follow; a neighborhood by neighborhood allocation of SDC's City-wide could actually reduce funding for Santa Clara and River Road; increase in capital facilities means increasing operational costs for which there may not be funding*

### **Heritage Options**

As noted above, the continued presence of even farm fields and ordinary woodlands can play an important role in sustaining the rural "feel" of a community. Heritage options in the context of this White Paper chapter are those that directly address the issue of preserving the rural "look and feel" of the River Road and Santa Clara communities. Heritage options for open space could focus on preserving the remaining segments of stream corridors, woodlands, wetlands and other natural areas left in the two neighborhoods. It is assumed, however, that there is no means by which the City can effectively facilitate or regulate the preservation of remaining "ordinary" farm lands outside the Urban Growth Boundary (UGB) except by first making changes to that boundary.

- **Option No. 1: Emphasize Parks Acquisition over Parks Development** – Such an approach focuses on the shrinking inventory of open spaces and undeveloped lands in the two

communities and emphasizes acquiring the land base now and deferring improvements and upgrades to the future.

**Advantages:** *Preserves lands now that could be “lost” to other uses if limited City parks resources are “divided” between parks acquisition and development priorities*

**Challenges:** *Some residents may feel that current parks need to be developed to their potential before new lands are brought into public ownership*

- **Option No. 2: Emphasize Open Space and Natural Area Acquisitions over more “Active” Park Site Acquisitions** - Similar to the preceding option except it puts additional priority on acquiring lands that preserve woodlands, stream corridors, wetlands, etc. as compared to lands that are suitable for development into park sites dedicated to more active uses (everything from playgrounds structures to ball fields).

**Advantages:** *Preserves lands now that could be lost if City parks resources are “divided” between active and passive parks acquisition priorities*

**Challenges:** *Some residents may feel that neighborhood and sports parks are a greater need in the community*

- **Option No. 3: City Development Policies** - Adopt new or revised land use and development policies that emphasize open space and natural area preservation and that require new or revised specific types of park and open space protections, set-asides and dedications, impact fees, and integration with other City policies and plans (such as surface water management).

**Advantages:** *City could choose to emphasize open spaces and natural areas with its land use regulatory authority*

**Challenges:** *Local land use authority can only go so far, even if City and regional plans effectively “backstop” such authority; would require a City-wide policy decision*

- **Option No. 4: Greenway Acquisition and Development** - The proximity of both communities to the Willamette River corridor is not necessarily readily apparent. An open space component of a heritage strategy could include developing and improving sites, access, signage, and infrastructure that highlight the River and draw community residents (and citizens from other areas) to this special resource. The River corridor (in conjunction with the UGB) also provides another significant “heritage” function – forming a distinct “green” boundary that tells visitors and residents alike that they have arrived in the River Road and Santa Clara community, a place where river vistas and sense of place is still part of a urbanizing landscape.

**Advantages:** *Preserves the most significant open space amenity left in or adjacent to both communities; potentially provides access to lands and water that can accommodate a wide variety of natural area, passive and active recreation amenities.*

**Challenges:** *There is no Greenway along the Santa Clara section of the River and the location of the River outside of the UGB as it flows adjacent to Santa Clara does not facilitate active City participation in acquisition and development (nor acquisition through development dedications); in both communities there is considerable development (and in the case of Santa Clara considerable distance) between the River and the north-south River Road arterial street; cost of Greenway acquisition and improvements*

## **What Another Community Has Done**



The *City of Sherwood, Oregon* developed a program to preserve in public ownership nearly all of that community's 100-year floodplain, stream corridor, wetlands, significant woodlot, and vistas, even as it became the fastest growing (by percentage) city in Oregon in the 1990's. Based on Sherwood's parks and open space master plan adopted in 1992, about 19% of the gross area within the UGB was planned to be set aside as open space by build-out (including active sports and recreation lands associated with Sherwood School District property). Sherwood also took an active role in preserving key river corridors outside of the local UGB by forging partnerships with other natural area providers (in this case the Metro regional government and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service), particularly in the establishment of the Tualatin River National Wildlife Refuge and Tonquin Geologic Area Significant Natural Area.

## **Land Use Planning**

### **Current Situation**

Both the River Road and Santa Clara communities have been transitioning from rural unincorporated neighborhoods to urbanized communities for many years. The City has had planning authority over the entirety of both communities via intergovernmental agreement with Lane County for close to 20 years. The two communities are undergoing gradual and incremental annexation and urbanization ranging from relatively major subdivisions to large lot partitions to in-fill or redevelopment. Rural subdivision patterns are being supplanted by contemporary developments, older commercial businesses must compete with new shopping centers on Beltline Road, and open fields and woodlots are disappearing. Some older roads in County jurisdiction roads are being re-constructed to full City collector and arterial standards. Population and traffic is increasing. New residents are arriving with different demands and perspectives from those neighbors that may have lived in River Road and Santa Clara for decades. Services that have been provided for years by local institutions (such as local parks and water districts) are under new pressures to address a new “generation” of citizen needs, and some special service districts are also experiencing declining revenues as due to annexation and shifts to City service providers.

The situation described above is not unusual or unique to Santa Clara or River Road. Such circumstances have been repeated across Oregon and the nation for decades as rural communities grow and become urban neighborhoods and cities. Given economic realities, population growth, land use laws (both communities are within Eugene/Springfield Urban Growth Boundary and thus long slated for urbanization), changing demographics, property rights issues and more, both River Road and Santa Clara will continue to incorporate and urbanize. A key community issue therefore is the extent to which these two communities (and the City) can cooperatively identify the most important elements of their “rural” heritage and act to preserve such attributes even as incorporation and development advances apace. Other chapters of this White Paper describe a range of options with respect to services such as public safety, parks and recreation, and streets. This “Land Use Planning” section focuses on the broader land use planning context within which such services are delivered.

The City (in some cases in partnership with Lane County) has several planning initiatives underway that will impact and potentially benefit River Road and Santa Clara. Many of these initiatives are described herein and in other chapters of this White Paper, including a master surface water management plan, a review of “context sensitive” street standards, and parks systems upgrades. The City is also undertaking a “periodic review” (a process mandated by Oregon land use planning statutes) of its Comprehensive Plan that will include protections for specific stream corridors. Such protections are consistent with neighborhood Heritage strategies outlined in the “Streets”, “Parks and Open Space” and “Surface Water” chapters of this White Paper.

#### **River Road**

The River Road community, particularly south of Horn Street, is characterized by long east-west blocks. Between Horn and Howard Street there are many long north-south blocks and some long local streets that simply dead end. These street patterns would “date” the area as older than other parts of the community. The River Road community north of Howard to Beltline Road has a subdivision and local street pattern that looks more typically contemporary and urban than south of Howard (e.g. blocks are shorter, there is more regular pattern of connectivity between streets, etc.), although the pattern is still very grid-like. The Bramblewood Park development is an exception to this characterization, exhibiting a mix of cul-de-sac and curvilinear streets that indicate a more recent subdivision.

There appears to be only a couple of tracts left in the River Road community that could accommodate substantial new residential development, therefore the potential for most new housing will be limited to single lot or small tract projects, or re-development and in-fill. Newer commercial development is concentrated along Beltline Road with older commercial development along portions of River Road. Approximately 30% of River Road has been annexed to the City through 2005.

The City initiated a historic sites survey and study for the River Road community in 2005. This “History Project” as it has been termed can serve the development of a community heritage strategy well, and should both inform and be part of any suite of heritage strategies and actions selected as an outcome of this White Paper.

### **Santa Clara**

The subdivision pattern of local streets in the Santa Clara community is generally more uniform than in the case of the River Road community. As a general characterization, subdivisions in the more southerly parts of this community look much like that between Howard and Beltline in the River Road community. Subdivisions gradually become more “contemporary” (e.g.: more cul-de-sacs and grid-like with fewer perfectly rectangular, 2:1 ratio lots) the further north one goes into Santa Clara. There is also a high coincidence between these more contemporary subdivisions and incorporation into the City. In contrast to River Road, approximately 40% of the community has been annexed as of 2005. While there are more and larger undeveloped tracts in Santa Clara than in the River Road community, Santa Clara is still relatively close to build-out (at least based on the parameter of larger tracts that could be subdivided). In-fill and redevelopment is always a possibility, especially in older parts of the community. Commercial development is concentrated along Beltline Road.

## **Transition and Heritage Options**

Lower or differing housing densities, “rural” building design standards, provisions for preserving treed streetscapes and existing street sections, requirements and improvements supporting neighborhood commercial zones, and open space retention are all potential elements in preserving the rural and community heritage and identity of the River Road and Santa Clara communities. These and other alternatives are discussed service by service in other chapters of this White Paper. Nonetheless, the most effective way to analyze alternatives and reach consensus on such a diversity of planning and services issues is probably NOT how they are treated within the context and limitations of this White Paper (e.g.: through taking up each issue separately). Simply put, the best way to reasonably assure that selected transition or heritage strategies and actions consider all the options available, and more importantly consider different service options as they play off against one another, is through comprehensive community planning efforts.

### **Transition Options**

Transition and heritage options are not distinguished for the purposes of this White Paper chapter (see the discussion under “Heritage Options” below). Also, note that many of the transition and heritage options discussed elsewhere in this White Paper under “Parks”, “Streets”, and other service specific chapters have important planning elements and impacts. The two options discussed below are those not touched on directly elsewhere in this White Paper.

### **Heritage Options**

- **Option No. 1: Community Transition Planning and Facilitation** – This option is effectively underway and funded by the City. One outcome, for instance, will be this White Paper, and another may be a set of strategies and actions that the City and the two communities (and other stakeholders such as existing local special service districts – water, fire, and recreation) can agree to and implement. Conceivably, some elements of the 1987 River Road/Santa Clara Urban Facilities Plan could be updated and/or expanded as part of a community refinement plan in conjunction with the current transition planning effort.

**Advantages:** *Is already funded and underway; addresses a relatively broad range of service issues; allows for the practical and strategic selection of heritage options; establishes a vehicle for the entire community to participate in planning their future; upon adoption outcomes such as a new community vision or refinement*

*plan for River Road and/or Santa Clara could potentially be part of amendments to the outdated 1987 Urban Facilities Plan.*

**Challenges:** *Would not have the policy status given to a City ADOPTED plan or policy, may not be as comprehensive or enforceable as a community or city-wide comprehensive plan; may be perceived as a City effort and one in which special service district service providers have little commitment.*

- **Option No. 2: Develop Community Comprehensive Plan(s)** – These could be independent, or a component, of the City's Comprehensive Plan, which is currently undergoing Periodic Review.

**Advantages:** *Deals with a broad range of heritage and planning issues in a comprehensive manner; allows for the practical and strategic selection of the most effective and feasible heritage options; establishes a vehicle for the entire community to participate in planning their future; upon adoption, provides for a benchmark of community agreement and consensus*

**Challenges:** *Cost of and commitment to such a process may prove prohibitive; timing, financial feasibility, and prior policy decisions may favor simply proceeding with incorporation first (or selecting a couple of heritage programs in isolation); other planning issues may legitimately have priority within the City; such a planning processes may reveal more divisions within the communities than are presently perceived; issues of equity may arise with other City areas wanting their "own" plan; integrating AND administering a series of community plans with a required overall City plan will be a challenge.*

- **Option No. 3: Neighborhood Centers** – Both communities have been considered for various planning options to create neighborhood centers or "nodes" based around commercial services. The presence of historic (and contemporary) town centers is a vital element in any heritage and community building strategy. As noted under the "Recreation" chapter of this White Paper, the River Road Parks and Recreation facility at Emerald Park seems to perform many community center functions, albeit not commercial ones. The City has also established a small Lower River Road Nodal Development Area (also referred to as the Rasor Park Mixed Use Area, named after a local parks space within the River Greenway) to encourage community oriented redevelopment.

Experience elsewhere suggests that revitalized neighborhood center nodes have common characteristics such as relatively narrow primary commercial streets, some mix of nearby public or quasi-public services and facilities (parks, libraries, theatres, restaurants), and a viable stock of architecturally interesting commercial structures built close to the street (and more or less contiguous with each other - often for several blocks). Neither the River Road arterial nor Beltline Road generally fit this profile. Beltline Road is dominated by contemporary "inward-looking" commercial development interspersed with transitional older commercial development. The River Road arterial is characterized by scattered older commercial structures set back from the street. In both cases, these streets are wide and very busy, thus functionally dividing potential neighborhood node(s) in half. Given this lack of "natural" attributes of successful neighborhood nodes, it will be a challenging and probably a capital intensive effort to create such nodes in along the River Road arterial and Beltline Road (note: the City currently has no plans for node creation along Beltline Road. Plans for the River Road arterial are highlighted below).

Creation of functioning community centers might be accomplished by establishing a series of smaller neighborhood nodes folded into existing commercial or mixed use developments, but serving areas defined by, rather than subdivided by, major roadways (e.g.: you simply don't try to get people across a busy roadway in the course of strolling around "their" neighborhood center). More capital intensive neighborhood node creation (at least with respect to traditional City and property owner obligations) could be facilitated by diverting through-traffic to other arterials and fully re-designing the River Road arterial and Beltline Road to lower classifications (at least for

intermittent sections), applying traffic calming retrofits to such select areas, and/or building grade-separated pedestrian crossing structures.

**Advantages:** *Viable communities are greatly enhanced by neighborhood centers that foster a sense of place and common neighborhood activity and interaction; centers are vital in preserving the community's place name and thus its heritage*

**Challenges:** *The built configuration of present commercial centers and abutting streets do not lend themselves to supporting viable neighborhood centers; capital infrastructure costs to remove "barriers" to viable neighborhood centers could be high*

**Option No. 4: Neighborhood Infill Strategies** – The City is currently developing "infill" strategies plans and policies for the Eugene as a whole. In Eugene and in other communities around Oregon and elsewhere the practical application of "building up, instead of out" is often resisted in reaction to perceived higher densities, "incompatible" housing styles, traffic impacts, and other issues. Careful planning and site design can help in mitigating such concerns, while attracting new residents, businesses and investment that may help revitalize the two communities.

**Advantages:** *Communities can be greatly enhanced by new residents, businesses, and building; gradual infill can have less overall impact to existing community character than major new developments or market driven increases in housing density and population permitted by general zoning upgrades; infill development can be "directed" to "clusters" where abutting streets, design guidelines and prior development facilitate better integration into the neighborhood*

**Challenges:** *The "sum" of neighborhood by neighborhood infill strategies may be counter to overall City density goals and requirements; even relatively modest infill development may generate concerns about community rural or suburban values being lost; in the new world of Measure 37 "takings" issues it may be more difficult to limit infill.*

### **What Another Community Has Done**

With respect to neighborhood nodes, *the City of Portland, Oregon* is notable for the seemingly "spontaneous" emergence of many vibrant neighborhood centers (NW 23<sup>rd</sup>, Clinton, Alberta, Hawthorne, Belmont, and North Mississippi). These revitalized neighborhood nodes have common characteristics such as relatively narrow primary commercial streets, and a viable stock of architecturally interesting commercial structures built close to the street (and more or less contiguous with each other -- often for several blocks). Neither the River Road arterial nor Beltline Road fit this profile. Another interesting characteristic of Portland's success is that, while the City of Portland and the Portland Development Commission have had important roles, many of these revitalizations have taken hold without significant (or at least primary) government intervention or involvement.

## **Recreation Services**

### **Current Situation**

#### **River Road**

Recreation services in the River Road community are provided by the long established River Road Parks and Recreation District and by the City of Eugene. The District operates Emerald Park, including a community center, indoor pool, fitness center, and outdoor recreational facilities. The District offers adult, youth and family sports and recreational programs. The District also operates two other sites offering recreation classes – The Annex at Hillcrest and River Road, and Gymnastics NW on Prairie Road.

The City makes an annual \$100,000 payment to the River Road Parks and Recreation District allowing in-City residents of River Road to use District facilities and programs at in-District rates. This payment is fixed and does not increase as the District's costs increase or as tax revenues decline with annexations to the City. There is no reciprocal agreement or payment permitting River Road non-City residents to use City facilities at in-City rates. District facilities and programs are also used by Santa Clara community residents who pay out-of-District fees.

City recreation services are provided through Eugene's Library, Recreation and Cultural Services Department. A wide variety of City recreation services are available to River Road residents at venues and sites around Eugene. An after-school recreation program is administered by the City at Kelly Middle School in River Road, funded by a Project Rising Expectations Grant in partnership with Eugene District 4-J Public Schools. Specific City parks facilities are discussed in more detail under the "Parks, Open Space and Natural Areas" chapter of this White Paper. Eugene's City-owned parks are operated and maintained by the City Public Works Department.

Presently, the River Road Parks and Recreation District devotes approximately three times the rate of taxes per \$1,000 to recreation services than does the City. To be fair, however, economies of scale are reflected in the portion of the City's tax rate that is devoted to recreation services, and no multi-purpose taxing entity is probably ever going to exceed the commitment of a single-purpose agency serving a smaller community. Therefore, tax rates devoted to recreation are not a very useful barometer relative to level of service.

In 2004 – 2005 there were discussions between the City and the River Road Parks and Recreation District addressing the stage at which all or nearly all of the River Road community is incorporated and the circumstances and terms under which the District might "sunset" as a special service district. Issues such as transfer of District staff, continuation of benefits, interim governance, and like concerns have been the primary focus. These discussions are currently on hold.

#### **Santa Clara**

No publicly owned and/or operated community or recreation centers are located in the Santa Clara, except for the Gymnastics NW facility operated by the River Road Parks and Recreation District. City recreation services are provided through Eugene's Library, Recreation and Cultural Services Department. A wide variety of City recreation services are available to Santa Clara residents at venues and sites around Eugene. The City administers an after-school recreation program at Madison Middle School in Santa Clara, funded by a special tax levy that expires in June 2007. Also, in partnership with Eugene School District 4J, the City jointly developed and administers the artificial surface playing field at North Eugene High School.

All parks within the Santa Clara community are owned and operated by the City. Lane County operates two riverside boat launches that are close-by but outside of the formal community boundary and the UGB. Please see the chapter of this White Paper entitled "Parks, Open Space and Natural Areas" for more discussion.

There are no recreation services directly (e.g.: at in-City or in-District fee rates) available to non-City Santa Clara residents, as there is no neighborhood parks and recreation district as in the River Road community (and Lane County does not provide recreation services). All Santa Clara residents may use River Road Parks and Recreation District facilities and programs by paying out-of-District fees. Santa Clara residents represent upwards of half of the overall patronage of Parks District programs. Non-City Santa Clara residents can also use City recreation facilities and programs by paying out-of-City fees.

## **Transition and Heritage Options**

### **River Road**

Given the apparent popularity with both tax- and fee payers of the River Road Parks and Recreation District, and limited City recreation programs delivered physically within the community, the City and the Parks District may consider focusing on solutions that perpetuate the District for as long as possible, rather than in negotiating for its end. A viable River Road Parks and Recreation District may also present some opportunities to provide more community recreation services in Santa Clara (see options below).

Please note that some of the options discussed herein for perpetuating the River Road Parks and Recreation District may face significant legal and practical limitations. Put most simply, at the point at which properties in the District are fully incorporated into the City, the District would have no property left to tax to generate operational funds. Even if alternative funding could be found, under State statutes (ORS 222.510) the continued operation of the District would not be permitted. Any continuance of the District past the point of complete incorporation into the City would have to involve the City withdrawing from providing recreation services to the neighborhood (or the City as a whole), and ceding such services to an expanded District or some other provider (such as Willamalane Parks and Recreation). These and related issues are discussed later in this chapter of the White Paper.

### **Santa Clara**

The above discussion regarding the River Road Parks and Recreation District begs the question of what happens in the Santa Clara community, which has no comparable community governed recreation service. At some point in the past, an expansion of River Road Parks and Recreation to include Santa Clara might have been a potential option. The pace of large tract incorporation and new development in the Santa Clara community, and the other issues surrounding the continuance of the District, even within its current service territory, may render expansion as an idea whose “time has passed”.

Alternatively, the River Road Parks and Recreation District could effectively expand to Santa Clara by contracting with the City to take over City recreation services in that community. Issues mitigating against this is the financial ability of the River Road Parks and Recreation District to undertake any necessary capital improvements (or lease of suitable space) in Santa Clara, the presently limited scope of City recreation programs delivered physically within the community, and whether a sufficient funds transfer could be obtained from the City so that District taxes collected from the River Road neighborhood were not, in effect, partly “transferred” to Santa Clara to subsidize new programs and/or facilities. Finally, there might be some reaction on the part of River Road residents over “their” parks and recreation district’s attention and finances being “diverted” by Santa Clara expansion obligations.

*Important note: Although the options presented below are organized into “transition” and “heritage” alternatives and also further sorted by community, this is only for the purposes of clarity and description. There may be many reasons for two or more options to be selected and combined into an overall strategy for recreation services to the River Road and Santa Clara communities.*

## **Transition Options**

Recreation service transition options are those alternatives that support continued recreation programs and services in one or both of the communities, but for which the ultimate outcome is the eventual replacement of the locally governed service with a City-wide or regional option.

- River Road Transition Option No. 1: Immediate River Road Parks and Recreation District Dissolution** – The District would simply cease operations and dispose of its assets as it sees fit and to the extent there is a market for such assets.
 

**Advantages:** *Recognizes the probable “ultimate” parks and recreation service configuration for River Road under current regional policy (e.g.: City provides services within its boundaries)*

**Challenges:** *Eliminates a popular and successful community institution perhaps “before its time”; means the loss of a local governance option for the community; potential loss of a community “center” (if no operator for Emerald Park is found)*
- River Road Transition Option No. 2: Dissolution Agreement with City** – Negotiate an agreement with the City for transition decision-making, timing of dissolution, disposal or transfer of assets, and transfer of employment of District staff (*note: such an agreement was the subject of active discussion between the District and the City in 2004 - 2005, and could still be a pragmatic element of an overall strategy for sustaining the District for a considerable period of time*).
 

**Advantages:** *Provides clarity to the timing of the District’s dissolution, disposal of assets, future of District employees, etc.*

**Challenges:** *Local investment in and support of the District may diminish once the transition is underway; may send the wrong message to District taxpayers and patrons (e.g.: that the District no longer needs community support or patronage).*
- River Road Transition Option No. 3: Contract for Recreation Services through City** - Negotiate an agreement with the City that specifies long-term decision-making arrangements, timing of the transition of the District from a direct to a contract service provider, disposal or transfer of assets, and transfer of employment of District staff. District would continue as a governance body but all services would be supplied by the City under contract (*similar to how the City provides fire protection services to all of River Road through a contract with the River Road Water District*).
 

**Advantages:** *Provides clarity to the timing of the District’s disposal of assets, future of District employees, etc.; continues an element of community governance in recreation service delivered to River Road (e.g.: the District would still be an independently governed special service district)*

**Challenges:** *Local investment in and support of the District may diminish once the transition is underway; still eliminates many elements of local control; may weaken and diminish status of the District as a key local institution*
- Santa Clara Transition Options** – As there are currently no “resident” recreation services for non-City property in Santa Clara, there are no services to transition and thus no transition options to delineate. Options for recreation services to this community are discussed under Santa Clara Heritage Options below.

### **Heritage Options**

Heritage options are those that will sustain the River Road Parks and Recreation District as a viable community service provider for the foreseeable future or create other viable entities for providing locally governed recreation services.

- River Road Heritage Option No. 1: Maintain Current Service Arrangements** – Continue to provide River Road Parks and Recreation District services as at present with the current out-of-District fees and City payment structure. A major impediment to the long-term viability of this option is the continued pace of annexation combined with factors as increases in operating costs and the fixed level of City support payments. Practically speaking, for the “status quo” to be



maintained in the long-term, the City would have to agree to some sort of scheduled increase in support payments tied to a benchmark such as the consumer price index, land values, or the rate of decline in the District's tax base due to annexation.

**Advantages:** *Status quo is maintained, element of local governance (e.g.: locally elected special district governing board) is maintained*

**Challenges:** *As incorporation of properties in River Road continues, the District's tax base will shrink - eventually to the point that the combination of taxes, City payments, and out-of-District program fees may no longer adequately or logically support District services and facilities; at the point at which the District is down to one property (theoretically this would be Emerald Park) an annual City transfer payment of approximately \$1.2 million would be required (note: this estimate is based on the 2005 District operating budget).*

- **River Road Heritage Option No. 2: Expand Current Agreement with City** – With respect to just the River Road community, include provisions in a modified agreement with the City allowing City resident fees for non-City residents wishing to use City programs and facilities. Note: see further discussion below on Santa Clara for additional related options.

**Advantages:** *Mirrors the current accommodation that Eugene makes for City residents in River Road wishing to use District facilities and programs; encourages cooperation between City and District services*

**Challenges:** *Potentially draws off patronage from District facilities and programs; also to the extent that District payments to the City under such an agreement may counterbalance current City payments to the District, the District's operations may be a net loser.*

- **River Road Heritage Option No. 3: Expand District Services within River Road** - Expand services beyond current agreements between the City and District by developing a contract whereby the District continues and expands its "home grown" services and potentially buys additional services from the City (or from other service providers for that matter), OR the City simply contracts with the District to be the direct provider of all recreation services in the community. Note: *in some respects this option is not all that different from some of the agreements that are currently in place or being considered. The important distinction is the central benchmark that all parties would start from – that the District needs to be preserved as a community institution and primary service provider for as long as possible (rather than the District needs to negotiate its orderly dissolution). This same "benchmark" can apply to other heritage options discussed herein.*

**Advantages:** *The District would maintain its autonomy and status as an important locally governed entity; a growing service provider is more likely to succeed as a long-term service provider; concerns over the future status of District employees, the gradual erosion of the District's tax base through annexation, keeping SDC revenue within the community, etc. could be further mitigated through contract terms.*

**Challenges:** *The District probably could not provide all the recreation services available through the City (suggesting the possible need for "reverse" cost reimbursements to Eugene to make City programs available to River Road); some River Road in-City residents may prefer direct service by Eugene; the City provides many recreation services to River Road (just not physically within River Road); other things being equal (such as adequate funding and other resources) the City could probably bring some cost efficiencies to recreation programming being a larger entity than even an expanded District.*

- **Santa Clara Heritage Option No. 1: Expand River Road Parks and Recreation District Services to Santa Clara** – The City could contract with the River Road Parks and Recreation

District to serve in-City Santa Clara residents in manner roughly similar to how the Eugene Water and Electric Board (EWEB) retails water services through the two local water districts, how the City provides fire protection through the River Road Water District, and how the City once contracted with Santa Clara Fire for fire protection services to in-City residents of that community.

**Advantages:** *Potentially provides the District with more revenue and patronage by expanding its base; the District would potentially strengthen its autonomy and status as an important locally governed entity; doesn't require voter approval of a District boundary change; provides Santa Clara with more direct access to locally governed recreation services; opens up opportunities for District developed and operated community facilities in Santa Clara.*

**Challenges:** *Not every City recreation program offered in or for Santa Clara may be in the interest of, or feasible for, the River Road Parks District to operate; revenues generated by a Santa Clara expansion may not match demand for services; the City provides many recreation services to Santa Clara (just not physically within Santa Clara); patrons of the District may prefer that the District concentrate exclusively on River Road; some Santa Clara in-City residents may prefer direct service by Eugene; doesn't necessarily solve the issue of service to non-City residents; cost of building the necessary physical recreation facilities.*

- **Santa Clara Option No. 2: Expand River Road Parks and Recreation District Boundaries to Santa Clara** – River Road incorporates Santa Clara into its special service district boundary.

**Advantages:** *Potentially strengthens the Parks District and improves its chances of "longevity"; gives Santa Clara a new governance option and community governed service around which to build and sustain its sense of community.*

**Challenges:** *Some Santa Clara residents may prefer City recreation services (and being able to obtain such services for in-City recreation fees); boundary change requires a vote; pace of annexation and new development in Santa Clara may make this an idea whose "time has passed"; the City provides many recreation services to Santa Clara (just not physically within Santa Clara); patrons of the District may prefer that the District concentrate exclusively on River Road; new taxes and fees generated by the expansion of the District may not be sufficient to meet Santa Clara's demands for District services; cost of building the necessary physical recreation facilities.*

### **Miscellaneous Options**

Miscellaneous options are those that do not fit "neatly" within the definitions of transition and heritage options and/or that contemplate changes that could significantly impact both of the two communities and/or the Eugene/Springfield metropolitan area as a whole.

- **Miscellaneous Option No. 1: Create or Expand a Regional Recreation Service Provider** - Current State statutes do not allow for special service districts to operate within cities if the city and the district provide the same service. Thus, for some options discussed above, the City of Eugene would have to "opt out" of recreation services if the River Road Parks and Recreation District were to continue in any form once its entire service territory was incorporated into the City.

If the City were to opt out of recreation services, the River Road Parks and Recreation District could theoretically contract with the City or expand its boundaries to serve the entire City. Alternatively, and technically at least significantly more possible than a River Road "take-over", the Willamalane Parks and Recreation District (currently the recreation services provider in the City of Springfield and parts of Lane County) could step in by contract or a voter approved boundary expansion. The scenario of River Road "morphing" into a regional service provider is

obviously very remote, and even a Willamalane expansion would entail considerable effort and negotiation.

**Advantages:** *Provides for a “recreation-centric” regional service provider; resolves all issues of resident and non-resident access to facilities and programs; potentially frees up City taxing authority for other services; taxing for recreation on a regional basis may be more attractive to the voters and may be more cost efficient*

**Challenges:** *Represents an almost unimaginable change for the River Road Parks and Recreation District, and a considerable change for Willamalane; does nothing for the issues of local community governance or heritage, and essentially acts counter to these concerns; local officials and/or voters may not be sympathetic to creating or expanding a regional recreation services authority*

- **Miscellaneous Option No. 2: Create New Community Center(s)** - As demonstrated by the functioning of River Road’s Emerald Park complex, some form of community center may be important to the survival of a sense of distinct “place” for the Santa Clara community, especially in light of the challenges in creating a Santa Clara/Beltline Road neighborhood commercial node (see further discussion under the chapter of this White Paper entitled “Land Use Planning”).

**Advantages:** *The very fact and function of new community center(s) is the “advantage”.*

**Challenges:** *Cost of purchasing, building or rehabilitating a center; cost of operating a center; finding a center operator*

- **Miscellaneous Option No. 3: Alternatives to New “Dedicated” Community Center** - Alternatives that could at least “backfill” some of the functions of a community center could be space in local City offices or Fire District fire halls, or lease (by the City or some other entity) of commercial space in neighborhood commercial nodes. The fiscal and operational viability of leasing commercial space or converting single purpose public facilities could be increased by aggregating several disparate activities – recreation, volunteer library, public safety storefront – in a single location.

**Advantages:** *The very fact and function of new neighborhood community center(s) is the “advantage”; leasing of commercial facilities (or multi-use of public facilities) may be a less cost intensive and a faster way to establish community centers than via a standalone, City owned facility.*

**Challenges:** *Cost of leasing or rehabilitating a center; cost of operating a center; finding a center operator; feasibility of using current single purpose public facilities for multi-purposes*

- **Miscellaneous Option No. 4: Designation of Parks Capital Funding** – As an approved new City policy, as part of an all-encompassing agreement with the River Road Parks and Recreation District, or as part of the implementation of another heritage or transition option described herein, the City could set aside the development-generated System Development Charges (SDC) funds collected in River Road and/or Santa Clara, and dedicate said funds exclusively to community recreation capital projects and land acquisitions.

**Advantages:** *Assures local parks fees are spent locally; potentially expands the capacity of both the City and Parks District to serve the communities directly*

**Challenges:** *SDC’s are calculated based on entire City need and allocation to the distinct community areas may be contrary to overall parks capital plans; segregation of parks funding in this manner may set a precedent that other communities will want to follow; increase in capital facilities means increasing operational costs for which there may not be funding; depending on how SDC and other capital funds are currently allocated, a community “earmarking” policy could actually reduce funding to River Road and Santa Clara*

### **What Another Community Has Done**

There are examples of parks districts in other regions that provide in-city parks services. For instance, the *Tualatin Hills Parks and Recreation District* provides all parks and recreation services within the City of Beaverton, Oregon. Closer to home, the *Willamalane Parks and Recreation District* provides similar service to the City of Springfield. Both these districts serve areas larger than just these cities, however, and current State statute does not allow for special service districts to operate within fully incorporated city territory if the city and the district provide the same service.

## **Streets**

### **Current Situation**

Information reviewed concerning community desires with respect to streets and transportation (such as the 2002 River Road/Santa Clara Urban Services Committee Report) indicates that preservation of rural streetscapes in the face of urbanization is second perhaps only to parks and open space as a transition issue impacting the two communities. The challenge in River Road and Santa Clara is to assure public safety and avoid problems as traffic volumes grow, while sustaining physical elements of the community heritage, such as older treed street sections.

Safety and traffic flows are obviously paramount concerns, but other values can be given significant consideration. The City is reasonably compelled to require full improvements at the time of redevelopment or redevelopment, simply because an adjacent new housing project can be required to make such upgrades as part of an overall development approval, or for traffic or safety considerations. Nonetheless, given that (at least with local streets) the issue of rural vs. suburban standards will often be most strongly felt in older developed neighborhoods, there may be opportunities for the City to facilitate the preservation of “heritage” streetscapes by balancing community needs with City-wide standards.

The surface street transportation systems in both communities include County and City jurisdiction roads. County and City built roadways differ somewhat in appearance, both because some County roads are older and reflect the standards of the past, and because standards are not necessarily consistent between the two jurisdictions. More recently constructed roads exhibit common standards irrespective of jurisdiction, as the City has exercised functional transportation planning authority for River Road and Santa Clara for nearly 20 years by intergovernmental agreement with Lane County.

The City and County have developed a series of other agreements for coordinating street maintenance and improvements in River Road and Santa Clara, and in other areas within the Urban Growth Boundary (UGB). Maintenance agreements specify individual streets as a City or County responsibility irrespective of legal jurisdiction. The most current agreements identify and assign responsibility for a long list of specific streets in the Santa Clara and River Road neighborhoods. The City and County also enter into agreements to fund and construct upgrades to roads in “mixed” jurisdiction areas.

There are some distinctions that can be made between the two communities when it comes to streets, primarily based on the pattern of older development and the opportunity for new or more recent development. These are described below. *For the purposes of discussing transition and heritage options addressing streets, however, the two communities will be treated herein together.*

With the caution that these are generalized descriptions with many exceptions, the pattern (and attendant implications) of community street patterns, could be described as follows:

#### **River Road**

River Road, particularly south of Horn Street, is characterized by long east-west blocks. Between Horn and Howard Street, there are many long north-south blocks and some long local streets that simply dead-end. These street patterns would “date” the area as older than other parts of the community.

River Road north of Howard to Beltline Road exhibits a subdivision and local street pattern that looks more typically contemporary and urban than areas south of Howard (e.g. blocks are shorter, there is more regular pattern of connectivity between streets, etc.), although the pattern is still very grid-like. A subdivision to the west of Bramblewood Park is an exception to this characterization, exhibiting a mix of cul-de-sac and curvilinear streets that indicate a more recent subdivision.

There appears to be only a couple of tracts left in the River Road community that could accommodate substantial new residential development, therefore most opportunities to upgrade streets through

development processes will be limited to single lot, in-fill, or small tract projects (or through City/County special assessment processes).

### **Santa Clara**

The pattern of local streets in the Santa Clara community is generally more uniform than with River Road. As a general characterization, local streets in the more southerly parts of Santa Clara look much like local streets between Howard and Beltline. Streets gradually become more curvilinear and “contemporary” (e.g.: more cul-de-sacs and grid-like with fewer perfectly rectangular, 2:1 ratio lots) the further north one goes in Santa Clara. There is also a high coincidence between these more contemporary subdivisions and incorporation into the City. While there appear to be more undeveloped tracts in Santa Clara than in River Road, the neighborhood is still relatively close to build-out, at least based on the parameter of platted lots. Generally, the contrasting pattern of development between the two communities may have the practical implication of making preservation of local streetscapes more of an issue in River Road than in Santa Clara, in the sense that there appears to be a greater number of “rural” local street sections left in the River Road community .

## **Transition and Heritage Options**

### **Transition Options**

Other than continuing to sustain the current cooperative efforts between the City and Lane County with respect to road jurisdiction, maintenance, and improvements, there are no “transition” options in Santa Clara and River Road as such. Potential standards and programs below all address heritage options (e.g.: those that will help to sustain aspects of the community’s historic rural character).

### **Heritage Options**

- **Option No. 1: Street Tree Preservation** - When existing older streets are upgraded, the City could develop a suite of options that help to preserve street trees and vistas. These options can apply to arterials and collectors as well as local streets. Such accommodations could include offsetting street sections within the right-of-way, reducing lane width, eliminating or reducing sidewalks on one or both sides, or building the street section closer than normally permitted to existing developments if the expected life span of the trees is greater than that of the existing development (e.g.: when the older structures are replaced, preferred setbacks can be re-established but the longer-lived trees will still be there).  
  
**Advantages:** *Preserves a very significant streetscape element; addresses a specific and significant issue of concern for many community residents; the City Code already includes provisions for designating and preserving “heritage” trees*  
**Challenges:** *Available right-of-way and age and/or location of abutting development may make such accommodations difficult; could involve significant variance from City standards; probably needs to be implemented as a City-wide option*
- **Option No. 2: Leave Local Streets “As-is”** - If residents on local (and perhaps minor collector) streets express a clear preference for open ditch drainage, no sidewalks, narrower sections and/or other “historic” characteristics of the street, the City could let matters remain “as-is”. This could be relatively straightforward action where lots abutting a residential street are essentially built-out. In such cases, the City would simply be continuing the status quo. In other cases, where continued infill or redevelopment increases densities, surface water flows, or traffic levels, conventional upgrade standards (and connectivity requirements) could be triggered when pre-determined thresholds are reached.

Presently, the City’s backlog with respect to paving unimproved streets and replacing worn infrastructure on other local streets is so great that “as-is” is in effect the City operational policy. Local streets are typically only upgraded in response to resident demand.

**Advantages:** *Preserves existing local streetscapes; City is probably unlikely to improve local streets without substantial pressure from residents; eliminates any sense (or reality) of dislocation among current residents to the extent that improvements may narrow front yards, cut down trees, increase traffic and attendant noise; narrower (presumably) paved street sections can deter traffic speeds and “short-cut” traffic; the City backlog in improving local streets is so great that “as-is” is in effect the de-facto operational policy.*

**Challenges:** *May perpetuate safety, drainage or other problems associated with the older street section (if such problems in fact exist); retaining older street sections may require increased maintenance costs*

- **Option No. 3: Local Street Transitions** - When existing local (and perhaps minor collector) streets are extended by new development, the City could consider utilizing the improvement level of the older section (or adopting some middle ground such as matched street widths, eliminating sidewalks, etc.) in building the new extensions. This approach should, however, be appropriately mitigated where the street is or becomes an access to a major activity center such as a school or park. City street standards are currently being reassessed with respect to narrower street sections, curb-less streets, and a variety of other “minimum” design parameters. If applied to local and collector streets in River Road and Santa Clara, these new standards could help address street transition and upgrade concerns/

**Advantages:** *Better preserves existing local streetscapes; provides for uniformity along individual streets (e.g.: avoids having improvements transition back and forth to differing standards); City street standards are currently being modified to permit narrower streets and other options that may help to preserve local character.*

**Challenges:** *Residents of newer sections may prefer to have urban level street improvements; opportunity for the City to obtain full standard streets through development dedications may be lost; may not be desirable where the extension means the street becomes an access to a significant traffic generator*

- **Option No. 4: Connectivity** – Many long-time neighborhood residents like their long dead-ended older streets. Absent some over-riding and significant public safety or access concern, the City could moderate its requirements for connectivity in association with deferring upgrades of local street sections (see options above). As a middle ground, the City could perhaps acquire right-of-way connections without building the actual connection, and/or initially limit connectivity to pedestrian sidewalks and/or bike lanes.

**Advantages:** *Preserves existing local streetscapes; limits any sense (or reality) of dislocation among current residents to the extent that improved connections may increase traffic and attendant noise; right-of-way acquisition preserves options for physical connections in the future; when associated with bike and pedestrian connectivity may reduce some vehicle trips*

**Challenges:** *Deferring connectivity is contrary to one of the goals of connectivity – reducing dependence on and length of vehicle trips; opportunity for the City to obtain full standard streets through development dedications may be lost; the State Transportation Rule makes connectivity and the provision of non-vehicular alternatives (such as pathways and bikeways) among the key considerations in transportation planning and improvements.*

- **Option No. 5: Traffic Calming** - A variety of effective and proven improvements are available to slow traffic and deter “short-cutting” of through traffic into local residential neighborhoods. Such traffic calming measures can go a long way to preserving the “feel” of a local street, even as the community grows and traffic increases around the neighborhood. These “calming” improvements include speed humps, traffic circles, median islands, narrowed pedestrian crossings, etc.

**Advantages:** *Already a City program; may help mitigate impacts of decisions to upgrade and/or connect streets; avoids to a great extent any policy and uniformity issues associated with varying standards for individual neighborhoods; traffic calming improvements - besides the safety benefits – can be used to help connect neighborhoods across busy streets*

**Challenges:** *Such improvements can be relatively expensive; some view such improvements as annoying to dangerous to simply too costly relative to the benefit*

- **Option No. 6: Arterial and Collector Upgrades** - In addition to applying some or all of the ideas above, the City might consider deferring complete urban street upgrades to higher traffic volume thresholds than presently applied. *(Note: the term “threshold” is used generically. The City does not have a street upgrade policy triggered by measured levels of service)*

**Advantages:** *Preserves existing streetscapes; defers high costs associated with arterial or collector upgrades*

**Challenges:** *Safety, maintenance and traffic volume issues for streets functioning as arterials or collectors without the physical capacity to do so properly; higher volume thresholds may be reached at a juncture where financing or priorities for such improvements are low; as arterials and collectors serve larger “constituencies” than just the neighborhoods they pass through, not all users may be sympathetic to “heritage” considerations*

### **What Another Community Has Done**

*The City of Eugene* is its own best example for some of options outlined above. The City already has a traffic calming program underway. The City has also been examining “Context Sensitive Design” Standards for at least one Eugene neighborhood (Crest Drive). The ideas presented above are simply some potential elements of a “context sensitive” reconsideration of the street standards applied to the Santa Clara and River Road communities.

*The City of Wilsonville, Oregon* has a longstanding street tree preservation policy that has been applied to all levels of street classifications. Connectivity can be deferred, sidewalks eliminated, building-to-curb setbacks reduced, street sections shifted within the right-of-way, and even rights-of-way reduced or re-routed. The threshold in the decline in level of service that warrants street upgrades are also set higher in Wilsonville than in some other communities. This policy is also applied to preserve wetlands and other sensitive lands in Wilsonville that are impacted by street extensions or upgrades. The City of Wilsonville also waives selected street standards in older neighborhoods in favor of preservation of the historic character of such areas. These policies have been applied to all street classifications – arterials, collectors and local streets



## **Surface Water Management**

### **Current Situation**

The City and Lane County share surface water management responsibilities in the River Road and Santa Clara communities, and are undertaking a joint surface water master plan for the two areas. Reviewed materials (such as the 2002 Urban Services Report) don't identify any major **perceived** surface water issues in the neighborhoods, although this could change as additional subdivision and infill occurs and older properties redevelop with more impermeable surfaces (or when a major storm event or particularly wet winter season causes significant flooding and drainage problems). Those concerns that are expressed in the 2002 Committee Report primarily speak to storm water quantity and localized flooding issues such as:

- Yard debris removal and illegal dumping (presumably with respect to the impact on localized flooding from clogged catch basins)
- Destruction and alteration of natural drainage channels and streams.
- Need for better planning and regulation of building and development practices that impact drainage.

Water quality issues are simply not mentioned in the 2002 Urban Services Report. Further examination or events could reveal more universal concerns, as surface water management has become a major driver of community planning in other Oregon communities (as well as other parts of Eugene).

City officials have identified a range of surface water management issues that past and present circumstances may not as yet have been "brought to the fore" in the minds of community residents. These include:

- The number of drywells in the two communities that may not comply with current environmental regulations
- Lack of an approved basin and surface water master plan(s) and regulations for the two communities (the City and County have such plans and regulations in development)
- Lack of water quality protections and Federal Clean Water Act standards for local waterways (these efforts are also underway by the City and County)

Concerns over the ability of rural surface water systems to handle urban flows are many and legitimate, although public agencies and private engineers have over the last 15 years been developing many "greeninfrastructure" solutions to both surface water quality and quantity concerns. *Clean Water Services* (formerly the Unified Sewerage Agency of Washington County) and its partner cities, and *Portland's Bureau of Environmental Services*, have pioneered many innovative and effective techniques, some of which have the side "benefit" of preserving more "rural type" landscapes and streetscapes. Although these solutions work best when undertaken in a comprehensive manner (e.g.: "ridgetop to streambed" solutions that include site design, downspout disconnects, eco-roofs, vegetative cover, "green streets", sensitive lands preservation, surface permeability limitations, and more), individual surface water system components (for instance, bio-swales) do have strong attributes when applied in situations that best support their effectiveness.

### **Transition and Heritage Options**

Surface water management appears to have few distinct transition or heritage impacts for River Road and Santa Clara, **except** for the impacts of various road drainage options on existing streetscapes and/or the benefits of preserving natural, drainage and stream corridors for both open space and surface water management benefits. These benefits, especially when combined with other potential community strategies, such a context sensitive street design and open space preservation, can be significant. These

are discussed briefly below and reiterated in specific options discussed under the “Planning”, “Streets”, and “Parks and Open Space” chapters of this White Paper

**Option No. 1: Street Drainage** - In the River Road and Santa Clara communities, “greenfrastructure” surface water management solutions can “backstop” some of the rural streetscape preservation ideas discussed elsewhere in this White Paper. One option is retention of open drainage ditches - re-constituted as bio-swales - that provide for many water quality and quantity benefits that are lost or that have to be engineered in conventional piped solutions to stormwater run-off. Adoption of such standards would compliment any changes in street section standards that preserve rural street appearance.

**Option No. 2: Integration with Open Space Preservation** - Another iteration of “greenfrastructure” solutions approaches is to incorporate water quality/quantity treatment or retention ponds directly into open space and park facilities, helping to control water flows and quality while also providing an open space and visual amenity. The preservation and restoration of streams and other natural water features, riparian zones, wetlands, 100-year floodplain, and natural drainage systems also can make significant contributions to water quality and flood management without resorting to “engineered” solutions.

## **OTHER SERVICES**

Two other services were included in River Road and Santa Clara Urban Services Committee Report published in 2002 - public safety and water supply. Sanitary sewer service was not discussed as a separate topic in the 2002 Committee Report, although the “forced” sewerage of both communities in the late 1980’s appears to be a nadir in neighborhood/City relations in the minds of many long-term residents. ***Sewer service as a transition or heritage issue appears to be moot at this point and will not be further discussed in the context of the transition or heritage options outlined in this White Paper.*** In addition, the impacts of differences in County and City standards and rates for solid waste collection and curb-side recycling was raised by the City in 2005.

Based on the above referenced 2002 Committee Report and other documents reviewed, the level and quality of police, solid waste and water supply services seem to be generally satisfactory (or at least acceptable) to the two communities. It should be noted, however, that some City and County officials consider that public safety services are more problematic than the “average” community resident may perceive. These issues are summarized below.

Nonetheless, based on documented perceptions within the two communities, few transition issues and even fewer heritage opportunities attach themselves to three of the above referenced services (sanitary sewer is excluded). Therefore, this chapter departs from the standard White Paper format, and only briefly discusses one or two issues and ideas for each service.

### **Public Safety**

A review of documents evaluating community needs and perceptions indicates that public safety services are generally not an overarching issue of concern in River Road or Santa Clara. This notwithstanding, Lane County officials do perceive serious public safety service issues county-wide, and have discussed public safety service proposals in response. In early 2005, Lane County considered sponsoring a ballot measure that would form a Public Safety special service district. Approval and implementation of such a measure could shift the equation with respect to County resources available to Santa Clara and River Road, although as a County-wide measure the special service district would not necessarily have more impact on River Road or Santa Clara than any other part of the County. This notwithstanding, the County appears as of writing not to be proceeding with this initiative.

Both Santa Clara and River Road benefit from the presence of City, County and/or State law enforcement based on municipal boundaries, road jurisdictions, inter-agency agreements, and “undocumented” practice. The “gerrymandered” pattern of City and County jurisdiction in both the River Road and Santa Clara communities can, however, make it particularly challenging for local law enforcement agencies to distinguish between their own citizens and other residents (although the onset of in-patrol car computers and other technology has made this a simpler matter than in the past). It is not unknown in areas transitioning from one jurisdiction to another that the law enforcement agency most proximate to the public safety incident will respond (particularly to emergency or major crime incidents) simply because public safety agencies often see it in the interest of overall local public safety to respond to calls and crimes in the community irrespective of jurisdictional status.

These are reasonably common issues in urban/rural transitions throughout Oregon and elsewhere, and the complications are sometimes mitigated by one law enforcement agency (typically the county sheriff) “withdrawing” from their jurisdictional territory in favor of a more proximate city police department. Such withdrawals are not necessarily memorialized by intergovernmental agreement.

***Alternatively, some County sheriffs offices have developed (and taxed for) “enhanced patrol” services on in-county lands immediately adjacent to cities that begin to take on urban characteristics as a result of population growth.***

Although the more “informal” withdrawal option described above works in many “transitioning” communities, it does raise issues of tax equity and can mean that less significant crimes and misdemeanors don’t get the full attention of public safety services. Short of an enhanced patrol option or public safety district solution, where a single law enforcement agency provides full service to all residents and businesses, the gerrymandered nature of the Santa Clara and River Road communities may work against “rationalizing” police services until such time as the entire area is incorporated. Then again, the current arrangements do not seem to be excessively problematic under present circumstances.

### **Solid Waste**

Solid waste collection and recycling was an issue not addressed in the Urban Services Committee’s 2002 Report. In early 2005, City officials expressed a concern over a perceived service and rate inequity between in-City and non-City solid waste collection customers in River Road and Santa Clara. Typically in many, if not most, other communities (at least in Oregon) the local government franchises out solid waste collection, curb-side recycling and yard debris pick-up to private haulers. Rates and service levels are established by multi-year franchise agreements. To the extent that rate and service differences between City and County residents and businesses in River Road and Santa Clara is a problem, ***an intergovernmental agreement for solid waste haulers whereby the City’s and County’s franchise terms – service standards, services offered, rates, etc. - are made identical may resolve the issue.***

### **Water Supply**

The River Road and Santa Clara Water Districts provide for “retail” water supply delivery and water system maintenance for non-City properties in these two neighborhoods. The two water districts are also responsible for maintaining and replacing local water transmission infrastructure. The Eugene Water and Electric Board (EWEB) provides service to City residents (both directly and through the two local water districts), and also “wholesales” water supply to the two local water districts for delivery to non-City properties.

The nature, regulation and complexity of contemporary water supply systems are such that the current system of direct provision or “wholesale” delivery through EWEB is really the only viable approach. In fact, ***with the only remaining functions of the two water districts being “pass-through” water retailers and providing for maintenance of the local delivery system, there is little substantial benefit left to sustaining these Districts, absent some benefit as a locally governed institution that has some measure of control over rates.*** Practically speaking, however, such small districts have little or no leverage in dictating rates or supply in a way that would appreciably benefit their local customers.

The same applies to the role of the two water districts in maintaining and improving transmission infrastructure. Again, this function may have some local control benefits, but practically speaking such small water districts may be severely restrained fiscally in their ability to make major capital improvements on their own.

***For River Road’s non-City residents, perhaps the most important “transition” benefit of the River Road Water District is in the District’s role as the contractor with the City for City fire protection services.*** Absent the Water District’s intergovernmental contracting authority, or an expansion of a neighboring rural fire protection district, parts of River Road could be theoretically be unprotected with respect to fire suppression. The only other River Road community institution that could take this role on (even theoretically) is the River Road Parks and Recreation District, which is a very unlikely choice.